

CHANDAMARA

MAY 1977

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for the story of
'KALIDASA-The Crown
of Poets'

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Yehi Hai ZINDAGI

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A CLOSE-UP OF A MAN'S INNERSELF—
THE CONFLICT BETWEEN HIS EGO AND HIS FULFILMENT



YOU COULD BE ONE OF THESE PERSONALITIES OF **Yehi Hai ZINDAGI**

EASTMAN COLOR
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YOU COULD BE ANAND



the father set out to achieve everything for his children—wealth, fame and status. Intelligent and hard working he believes, he can possess anything in the world with money. The ambition drives him, his ego boosts him.

YOU COULD BE KAMALA



the teen age daughter, a victim of circumstances, takes bold decisions on her own.

YOU COULD BE GAYATRI



the devoted wife and ideal mother, the source of harmony and moral courage, in times of success and distress. Endeavours from beginning to the end, to bring her husband, face to face with facts of life.

YOU COULD BE RADHA



the graceful daughter-in-law, filling the house with charm and cheer.

YOU COULD BE MADHU OR GOVIND



the proud sons endowed with wealth and influence, seeking the ways of the world.

YOU COULD BE KADER MIYA



a good friend, philosopher and guide.



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Chandamama (English)

May 1977



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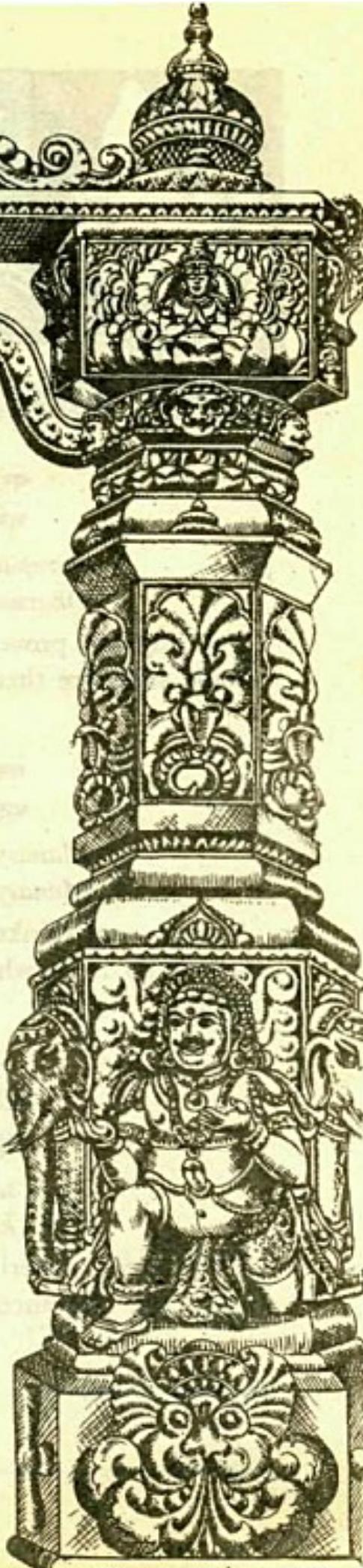
OF SPEECH AND SILENCE

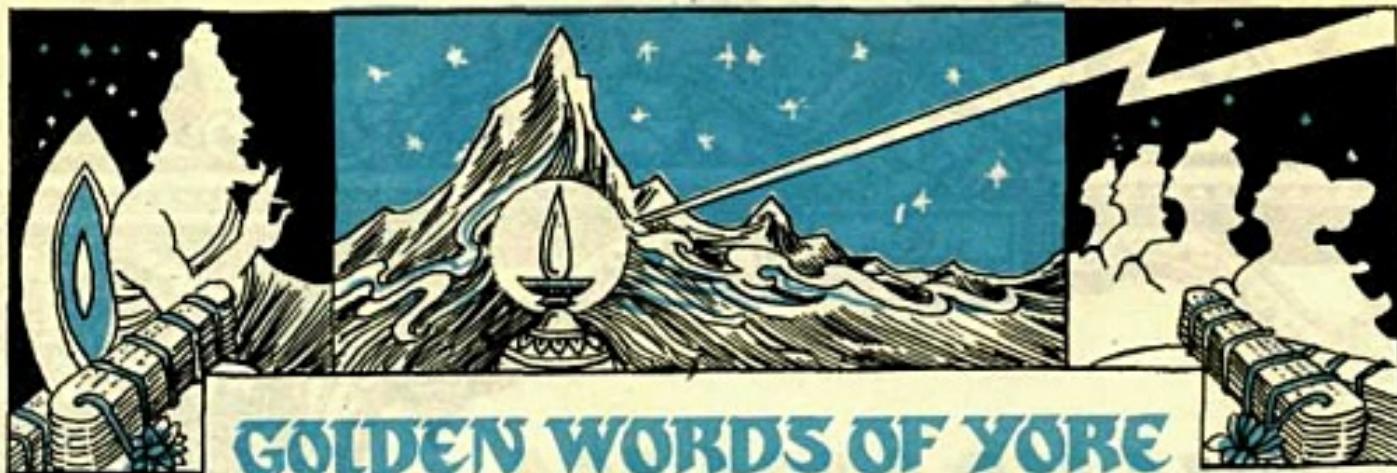
A good - natured peasant in a novel of the Russian Nobel-laureate, Solokov, is very fond of talking. Every time he stands up for making a speech, he begins with, "A good word is a piece of silver..." until one day an irate listener rebuffs him, saying, "True, but silence is golden. Why don't you exchange all your silver for gold?"

Once a child asked the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram why people talk uselessly. Her reply was: "...that is probably because man is instinctively very proud of being able to wield the word! He is the first being on earth who can speak.... like a child who has a new toy it likes to play with very much. Man is the only animal on earth who has articulate sounds at his disposal, so he plays with them...."

Indeed, in our proud eagerness to talk, we forget that many a great thing happens without making any noise; a great event like the sunrise or a beautiful event like the blossoming of a flower occurs in silence. Changes in our heart and mind take place in silence. An inspiration to a writer or an artist comes in silence.

And in silence can be conveyed a very meaningful message. "The Captive Bird", an ancient Sufi tale retold in this issue, tells us this great truth.





GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

परोपदेशो पाण्डित्यं सर्वेषां सुकरं नृणाम् ।
थर्मे स्वीयमनुष्ठानं कस्यचित् तु महात्मनः ॥

*Paropadeśe pāṇḍityam sarveṣām sukaram nrṇām
Dharme sviyamanuṣṭhānam kasyacit tu mahātmanah*

Anybody can prove himself dexterous in preaching truth to others. But few noble souls are there who practise truth themselves.

The Hitopadeshah

मनस्येकं वचस्येकं कर्मस्येकं महात्मनाम् ।
मनस्यन्यद् वचस्यन्यत् कार्ये चान्यद् दुरात्मनाम् ॥
*Manasyekam vacasyekam karmanyekam mahātmanām
Manasyanyad vacasyanyat kārye cānyad durātmanām*

A noble soul thinks and speaks the same thing. But a wicked person speaks differently from what he thinks and acts differently from what he thinks or speaks.

The Samayochita Padyamalika

यदि सन्ति गुणाः पुंसां विकसन्त्येव ते स्वयम् ।
नहि कस्तूरिकामोदेः शपथेन विभाष्यते ॥
*Yadi santi gunāḥ pūṁsām vikasantyeva te svayam
Nahi kasturikāmodeḥ śapathena vibhāvyate*

If a person has merit, it will shine of itself. No loud declaration is necessary to prove the fragrance of the musk.

The Samayochita Padyamalika

THE KING THAT TURNED DEMON

Who was greater—a king who was the master over the land and the people, or a sage who was given to spiritual quests? This question was resolved thousands of years ago.

It all began when King Saudas, while walking alone through a narrow forest



lane, confronted Shaktri, a young sage.

"Give me way," said Saudas gravely, "for I'm the king!"

"But is it not for you to step aside and allow a sage to pass?" demanded Shaktri. The king lost his temper, flashed his whip and lashed the sage.



"You are unfit to be not only a king, but even a human being. For your demoniac wrath you should change into a demon." This is the curse Shaktri uttered as he left the place in a huff.



The young sage's curse was heard by a demon-vampire which sat on a tree. At once it descended on the king and began to infiltrate into him. The king could do nothing to dislodge it.

Feeling extremely awkward, the king began to run. By and by his features took a fearful shape. By the time he reached near a hut in the interior of the forest, he had turned into a full-fledged demon.



The hut belonged to none other than Shaktri. Upon hearing the heavy footsteps, the young sage came out to the open. Saudas, now a ferocious demon, took hold of Shaktri and devoured him.

But the demon's wrath was not quenched with his devouring Shaktri alone. Shaktri had a hundred brothers. The demon soon stormed into the part of the forest where they lived and devoured them all.



Shaktri and his hundred brothers were the sons of the great rishi, Vasistha. When Vasistha heard about the misfortune of his sons, his sorrow knew no bound. He decided to put an end to his own life.

The remorseful Vasistha arrived on the bank of a river and jumped into it. But the river instantly split itself into a hundred shallow streams. Vasistha did not find enough water to drown himself. Because the river split itself into a hundred streams, it became known as "Shatadru".





Vasistha went over to yet another river. He got his hands bound so that he could not swim and plunged into the water. But, lo! the deity of the river opened the knot on the rishi's hands and gently pushed him over to the bank.

Because the river opened the rishi's knot, it became known as 'Vipasha'.

Vasistha was returning home when he heard someone chanting the vedic hymns. He looked back and saw that his daughter-in-law, Shaktri's wife, was following him. Shaktri's unborn son was reciting the hymns from the mother's womb. Vasistha was happy that his family line had not ended with the death of his sons.



The demon soon came to Vasistha's hut in order to devour him. The mighty rishi could have destroyed him. But instead he mustered his Yogic power and with great compassion sprinkled a little water on the demon. The demon changed into King Saudas again.

Thus was proved the superiority of the rishi—for his nobleness and endurance.



LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

A TRIVIAL ACTION THAT RAISED A RIOT

A sage wandered from village to village, from town to town, followed by a lone disciple.

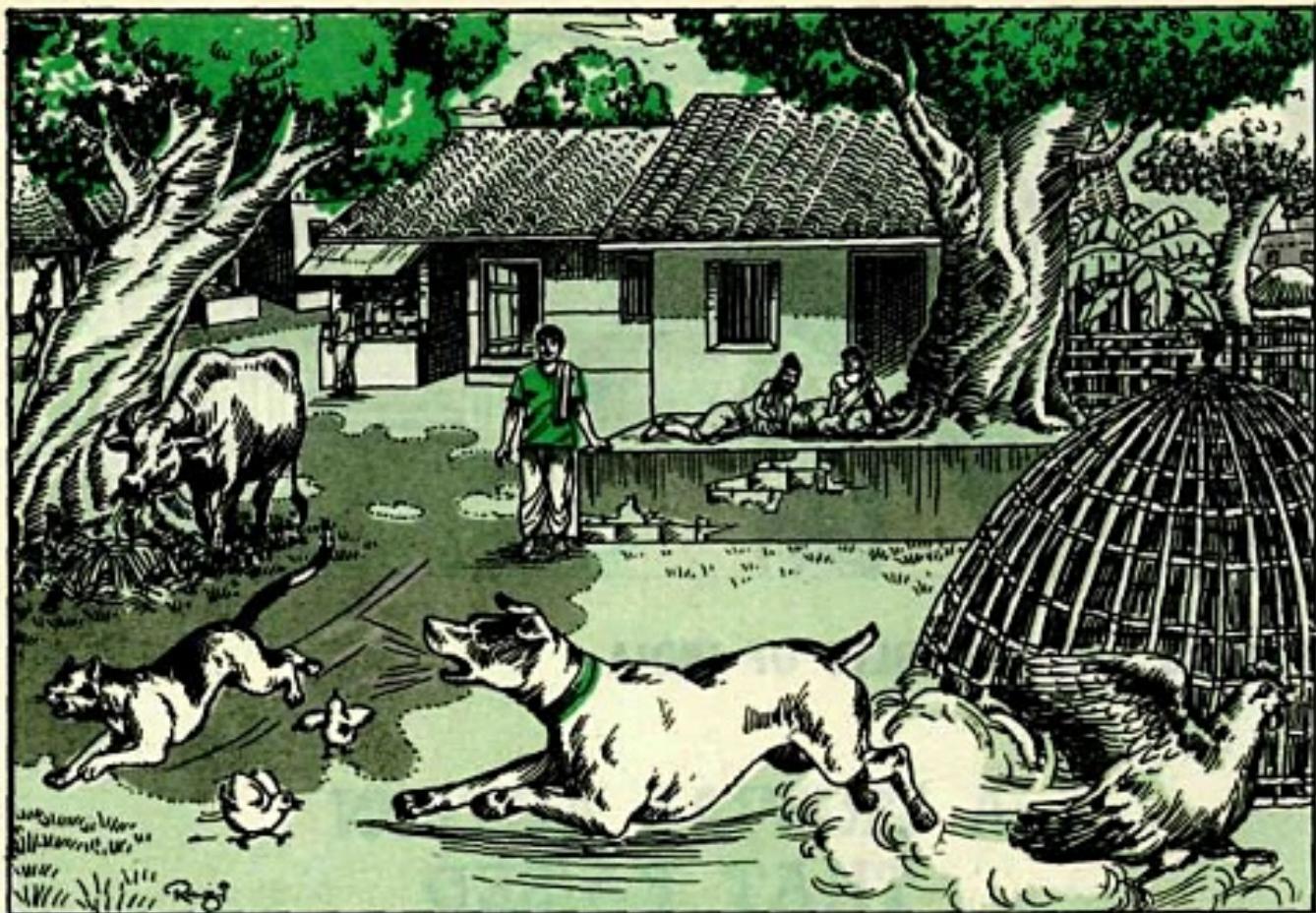
The disciple, a restless young man, was in the habit of talking rashly and doing things which were not necessary. "My boy, you must try to exercise some control over your speech and your actions," the sage often reminded the disciple.

It was a hot noon. The two travellers rested under a shed at the centre of a bazar. Opposite to them was a grocer's shop. At the moment there was no

customer in the shop. The shop-keeper was looking into his stock of various goods and handling them idly. While doing so, he dipped a finger into a jar of honey and then wiped the finger against a pillar, leaving a patch of honey on it.

"It was quite idle of him and also unnecessary for him to do so," the sage told his disciple as they were about to leave the shed. Further, he added with a sigh, "It may cause harm to many!"

"But, Master, what is the



harm in such an innocent action, even if it served no purpose?" asked the disciple.

The sage looked at the disciple for a moment. He realised that the young man had developed the impression that he saw the cause of fear where there was none! He said, "My boy, let us then wait here for an hour and see."

They kept sitting under the shed quietly, keeping a close watch on the shop. Soon a swarm of flies gathered on the patch of honey on the pillar. As they fought among themselves to gain access to the

honey, they attracted the attention of a lizard which was on the wall. Slowly it came over to the pillar and gobbled up a number of flies with swift motions of its tongue.

The shop-keeper's cat which was lolling on a pillow at its master's back and had not found any occasion to be active for some time, sprang up at the bright lizard and clawed it down to the ground. The lizard tried to escape and the cat chased it to the road.

Suddenly a smart little dog rushed at the cat and bit it. The cat gave out a piercing

shriek. The shop-keeper hurried down to the road, picked up a heavy cake of brick and threw it at the dog.

The dog was injured and it barked furiously, attracting everybody's attention to its plight.

The dog was landlord's pet. The landlord, accompanied by his pet, was taking a walk to a friend's house. He had stopped before the shop for talking to a gentleman, when the dog was punished by the shop-keeper.

Now, it so happened that the shop-keeper and the landlord belonged to two rival communities who used to hate each other. When the landlord found his pet dog injured, he raised a hue and cry, claiming that the shop-keeper had done so deliberately, to insult him.

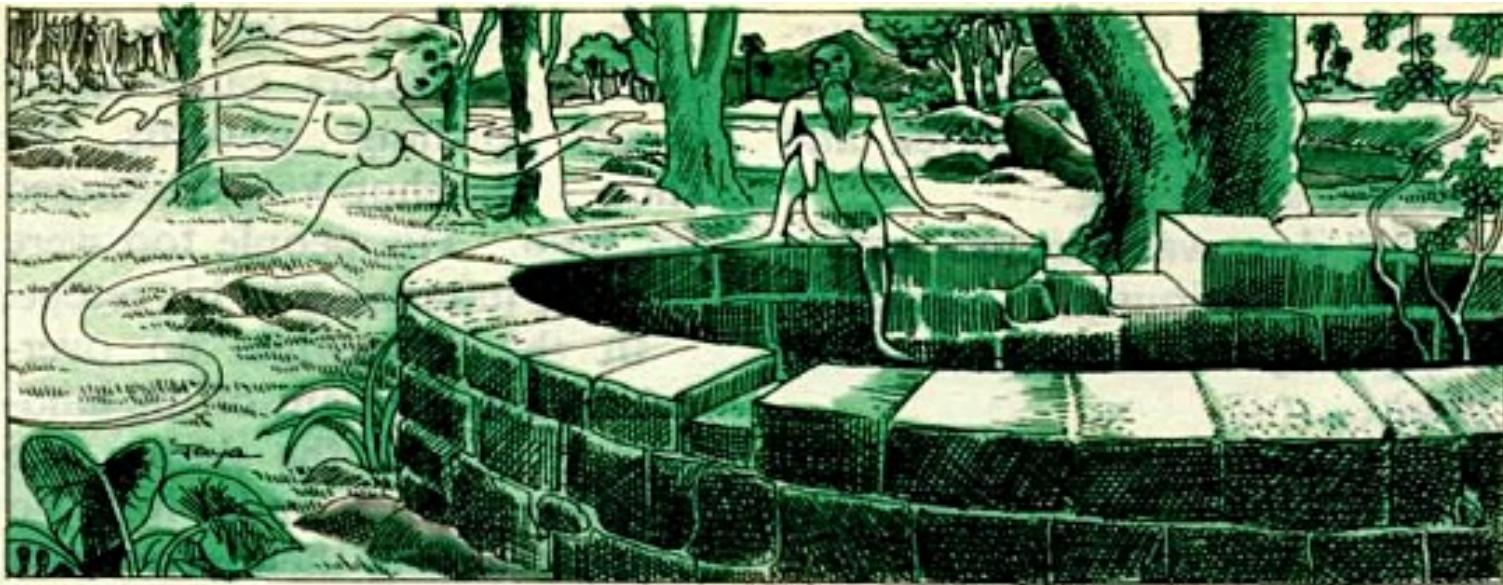
In a few minutes the landlord's supporters came menacingly rushing towards the shop. The shop-keeper shouted for help. His people too were not late in coming to his rescue.

In the meanwhile an over-enthusiastic servant of the landlord set fire to the shop. The shop-keeper's friends lost no time in arming themselves with sticks and other weapons and attacking the landlord's people.

A riot ensued. Several thatches went in flames. Many a bone was broken.

As flames and smoke blinded the sky, the sage and his disciple left the bazar. After they breathed freely for a while in the open, the disciple touched the sage's feet and said, "I learnt a great lesson today, my Master!"





The Spook and The Musician

To the north of the town was a burial ground where lived a number of ghosts, spooks and goblins. At a corner of the ground was an old abandoned well.

The well was the home of an old spook who was an honorary adviser to all the other weird beings of that region. He had a ready solution to any problem. And he was ever eager to advice others. If no one came to him, he felt quite depressed.

"Grandpa! I am vexed with a difficult problem. What am I to do?" one day a she-spook asked the honorary adviser.

"What is your problem, sweet little spook?" asked the old one in a patronising tone.

"On the other side of the village, at the centre of a grove, was a deserted house which I occupied last year. I lived there in peace till the other day. Then a musician from the town came to live there and that was the end of my peace! He and his students go on yelling and screaming till late in the night and that makes me shiver with fever. What should I do? How to drive away the musician from the house?" asked the she-spook.

"That is easy," said the wise old spook and then he told her what she should do.

At midnight the musician woke up at a loud mew. He sat up and saw a huge cat standing

right on his blanket. He was about to give a blow to it when it changed into the spook that it was and said, "I am the resident of the house which you have occupied. Will you now get out?"

"Not at all!" replied the musician. "I would rather welcome your visit to this house in the guise of a cat so that the rats could be scared away."

"What! You mean I have come to serve you? Look here, I change into a lizard!" said the spook in a nasal tone and became a lizard.

"That is fine. Gobble up the flies and ants scattered on

the wall!" the musician ordered and closed his eyes.

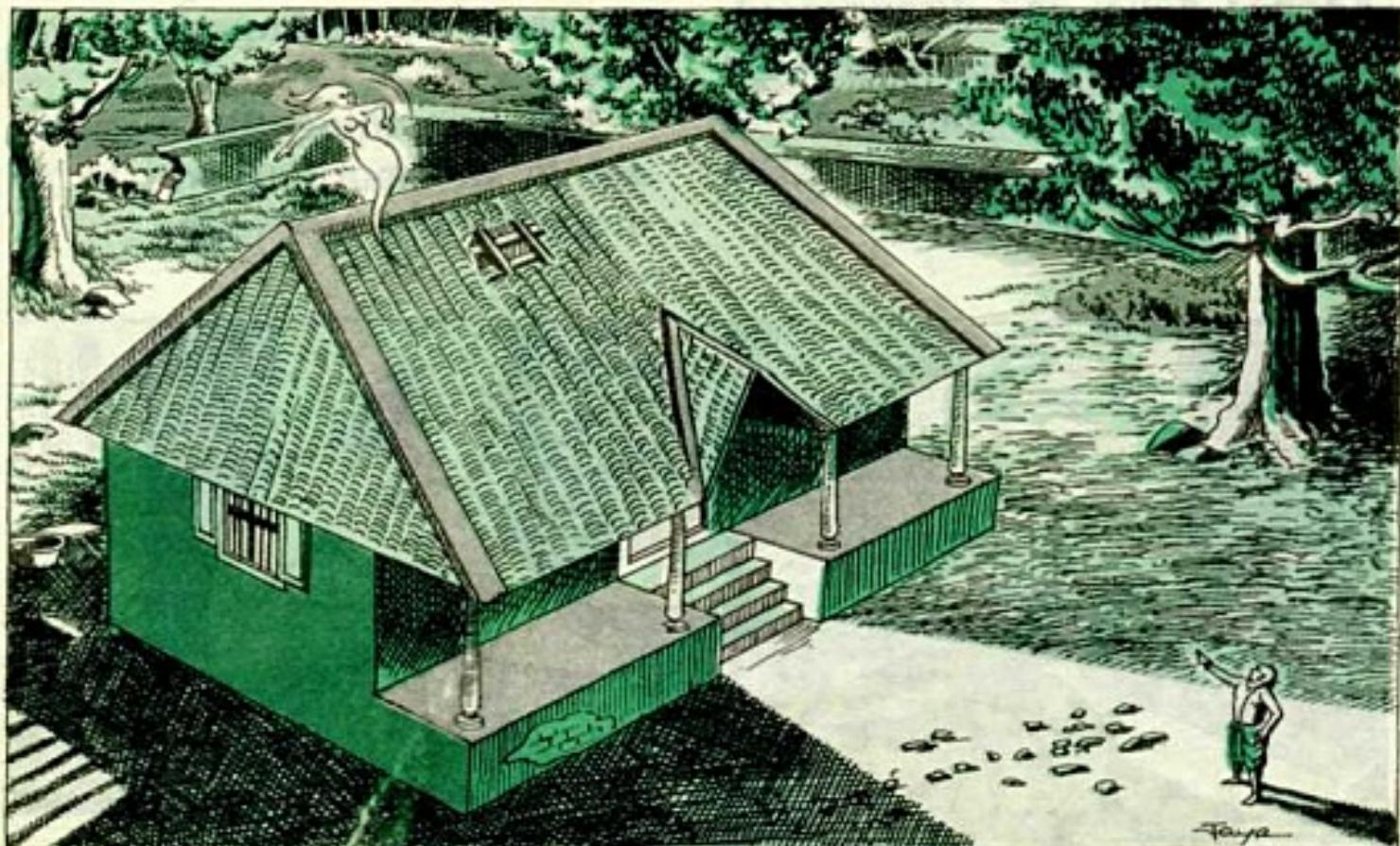
"This is an incorrigible fellow!" the spook cried out and left.

"What happened? Could you scare away the fellow?" asked the honorary adviser when the she-spook arrived at the well.

"Far from that!" she answered sadly. "The obstinate fellow began to boss over me and scared me away."

The old spook remained thoughtful for a moment and then said, "Never mind. Now do as I say and watch for the result." He then briefed her what she should do next.

Next night, the musician had



just fallen asleep when a crashing sound woke him up. He rushed out and saw that a slab of tile, removed from his roof, had been thrown down which lay dashed to pieces. Who should do the mischief but the spook!

The spook who stood on the roof looked very happy with her achievement. But the musician said, "Thank you very much for your help, you nice spook, please continue to remove the tiles. I wonder who told you that I was planning to remove them for constructing a concrete roof!"

The spook's face paled. She hopped down and disappeared.

"I'm sure, you have brought good news. The musician has packed off, hasn't he?" asked the honorary adviser.

"Stop your gibberish, you old fool! Your advices are as useless though as abundant as the stale water in this well!" shouted the she-spook. "I've decided to put up with the musician," she added.

Next night the she-spook sat on the musician's bed and said, "I have decided not only to live peacefully with you in this house but also to enrol myself as your student. I have a sweet voice, haven't I?"

The spook then began to give a demonstration of her musical talent. The horrified musician exclaimed, "Wonderful. Now you can stop!" But that only further inspired the spook and she went on yelling till it was dawn.

The first thing the musician did in the morning was to go in search of a new lodge.





THE CAPTIVE BIRD

Once a merchant was passing through a forest. As night approached, his party perched tents on the bank of a lake in the forest itself and went to sleep.

In the morning the merchant's sleep thinned away with the singing of a bird. So sweet was the bird's song that he lay on his bed for a long time, listening to it, feeling charmed. Then, unable to check himself, he came out and looked for the bird. Atop a flowery tree sat the bird, singing to the rising sun. The bird was as beautiful as its voice was sweet.

"Sweet bird! Will you come with me to my home in the town? I will give all the comfort you might want and much

more," said the merchant.

"Thank you. But I do not wish to leave this wonderful forest. This tree and my small nest here are comfort enough for me," replied the bird.

"You consider the forest wonderful, do you? That is because you do not know how wonderful the town is. My mansion is situated in the finest area of the city. And I have a garden the like of which is to be seen nowhere in the kingdom. I will leave the entire garden to you," said the merchant.

"I am sorry, sir, but I have no desire to see the wonders of your city, nor am I inclined to enjoy the luxury of your unique garden. Nevertheless, thank you for your offer," said the



bird and it resumed singing.

The merchant returned to his tent, but he kept an eye on the bird while he enjoyed its music.

After an hour the bird flew away. The merchant devised a small trap with thin but strong cord and climbed the tree and set it in the bird's nest. With the end of the cord in his hand, he waited near the lake.

The bird returned to its nest by midday. As soon as it sat down, the merchant pulled the end of the cord and the bird was entrapped, its legs caught in a tight knot.

The merchant gently pulled the cord. The bird was obliged

to come nearer him, flapping its wings in a helpless manner.

"Be sure, I will never mistreat you. I will give you the best of fruits available in the world. You will dwell in a golden cage in my magnificent drawing room," said the merchant when the bird was at last in his hand.

He then ordered his men to fold up the tents. After a few days the merchant reached home. Very soon the bird became the talk of the town. All the important people of the town came to see it. Although the bird's song was rather sad, people were still charmed by it.

True to his word, the merchant kept the bird in a golden cage and provided it with the best of fruits. He never took a good dish himself without giving a bit of it to the bird.

"Look at the tributes and the treatment you get!" the merchant often told the bird and asked, "Is there a second bird in the world which can claim to enjoy such comfort and position?"

The bird would sigh and keep quiet.

Two years passed. It was time for the merchant to go out on a business trip again. He stood before the cage and said,

"Sweet bird! I will have to cross the forest from which I had caught you. If you so desire, you can send a message through me to any of your friends in the forest."

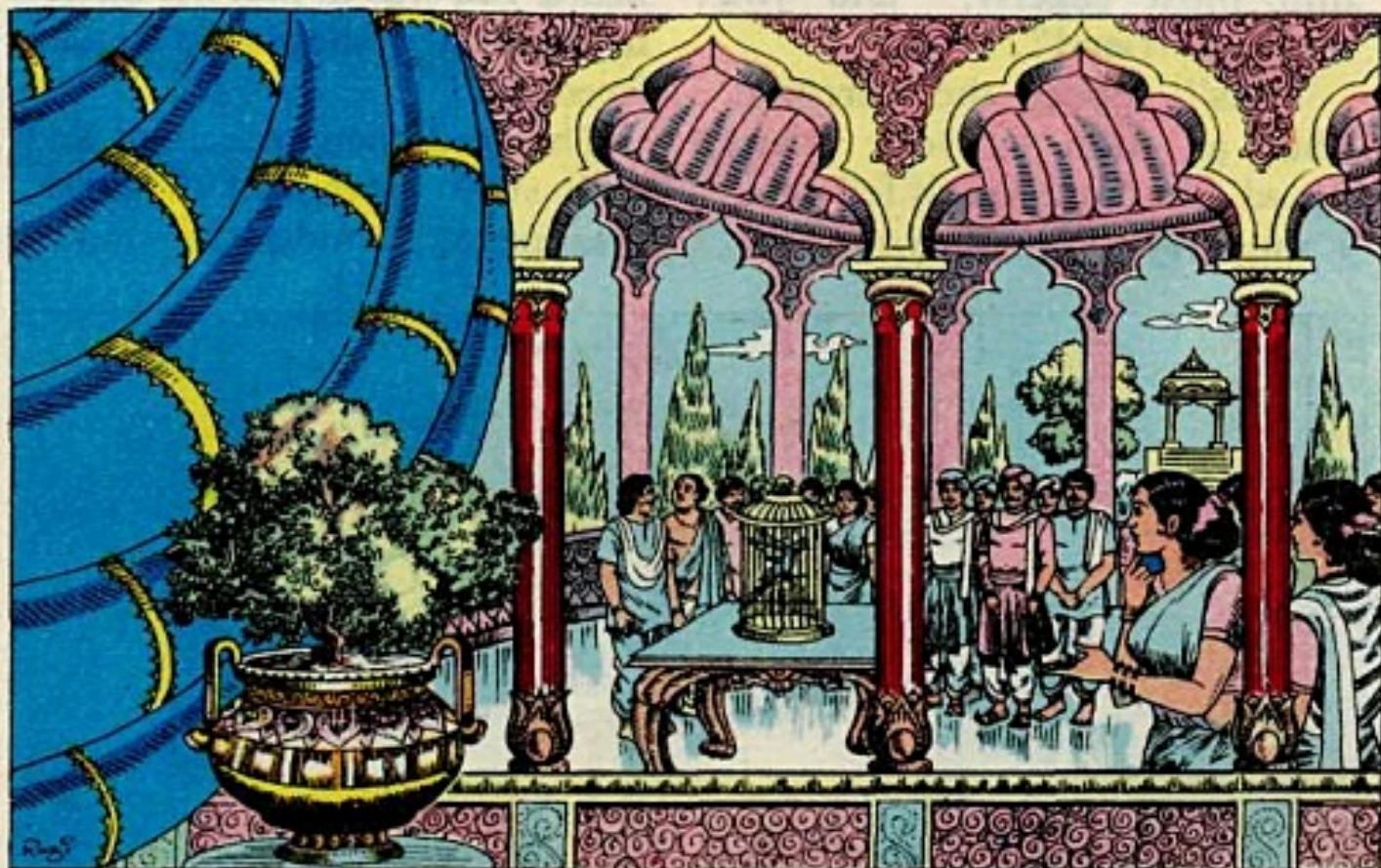
"O master! Should you not be kind to let me go, now that I have already served you for two long years?" pleaded the 'bird.

"No doubt your presence in my house and your song have added to my joy and prestige. But for that, have I not taken great care of you? To allow you to go away is out of the question," replied the merchant.

"In that case, please do me a small favour. On the opposite

bank of the lake from where you caught me stands an old banian tree. There lives another bird, a childhood friend of mine. She must have felt bewildered at my sudden disappearance. Please stop under the tree for a while and tell her how I was taken prisoner by you and that I am pining away thinking of my freedom, my forest, and my friends."

The merchant promised to do as requested. On his return journey he spotted the old banian tree and had a close look at it. Indeed, there sat a solitary bird on the topmost branch of the tree.



The merchant delivered the message sent by the captive bird. It seemed, the bird on the tree listened to his speech with rapt attention. But, to the merchant's great amazement, instead of giving a message in return, the bird suddenly dropped into a bush below. The merchant stood there for a while. But there was no sign of the bird stirring inside the bush. He understood that it had died. "Perhaps the news of its friend's incarceration proved too great a shock for it," the merchant concluded.

When the merchant was back home, the captive bird asked him most eagerly, "Did you meet my friend?"

"Yes", replied the merchant, "but as soon as your friend heard all about you, it fell dead I am sorry to inform you!"

The captive bird gave out a shriek and dropped dead inside its cage.

The merchant felt extremely sad. "Perhaps I should not have told it about its friend's death," he murmured. He then opened the cage and brought the bird out and laid it on the floor. No sooner had he taken his hands off the bird than it flew away into the garden and perched on a tree.

"What is this?" asked the merchant in bewilderment.

"Don't you understand?" said the bird. "This is the course my friend advised me to follow. What she did when she heard you was in fact her advice to me what I should do to gain freedom."

The bird then rose high and with swift movement of wings, disappeared amidst the clouds.





The Builders of India's Heritage

Kalidasa-The Crown of Poets

Wonderful was the princess—both for her beauty and her wisdom. No pundit of her father's court, nay, not even well-known scholars from far and near, could defeat her in a contest of knowledge.

And strange was her resolution: unless a suitor proved himself superior to her in knowledge, he could not win her hand in marriage.

Many a scholar tried their luck, but had to return disappointed. And some of them were not made of the stuff to take their humiliation lying down. They conspired among themselves to humiliate the princess. They went out in search of the foremost fool. They tried a number of men—for there was no dearth of fools—

but every fool proved to be clever in some respect or the other.

At last the angry scholars chanced upon a handsome young man who sat on a branch high on a tree and was busy cutting the branch from its very bottom. The scholars arrived near the tree just in time to force him down before the branch had been snapped throwing its jolly rider to death!

The scholars examined the fellow and were quite satisfied that they had met the complete fool.

They bought him a set of glittering dress and adorned him with a variety of ornaments and sprinkled costly perfumes on him and led him to the king's palace.

The fool was duly interviewed by the princess. She showed him a finger, perhaps meaning that there was only one God. The fool, not to be outdone, at once showed two fingers, although he never opened his lips. The scholars interpreted his gesture saying that he meant there were two aspects of God — God the unmanifest and God as manifested in the shape of this universe!

It seems, the princess was not allowed to examine the suitor in more detail. The scholars somehow convinced the king that he was a gem among the learned sages and the king married his extraordinary daughter to him rather hastily.

But the princess found out the truth when she met her husband alone. Humiliated by her, her consort left the palace and reached a temple of Kali and devoted himself to a severe penance. The Goddess Kali at last appeared before him and offered to grant him a boon.

"Grant that I become the greatest of all poets!" prayed the devotee.

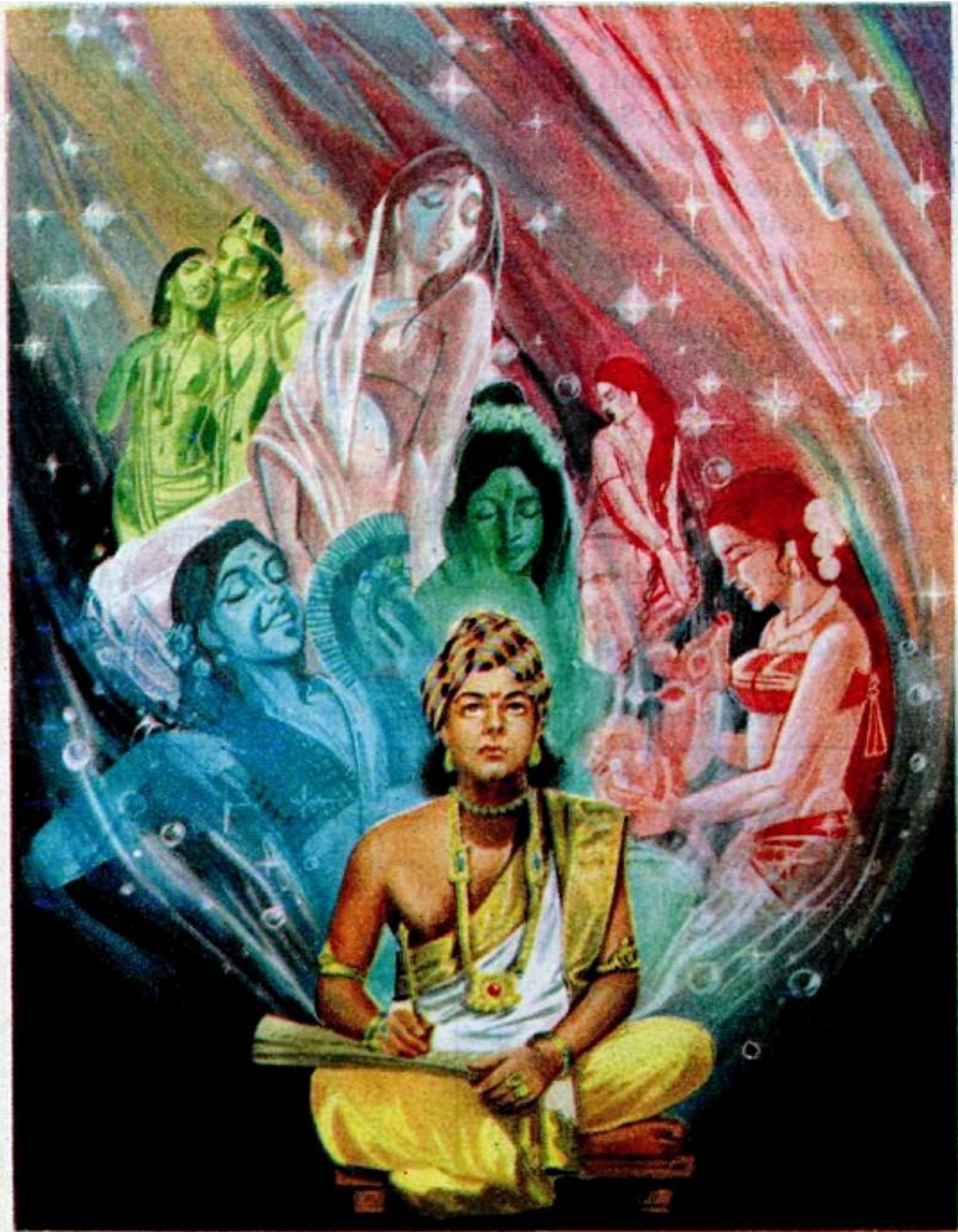
"My child! You are supposed to live as an ordinary man not only in this life but also during seven more incarnations of

yours! How can I make you a poet right now?" explained the Goddess.

But the young devotee was in no mood to give up his pleading. Kali was obliged to turn into Goddess Saraswati and take the soul of the devotee seven times into Herself and bring it out seven times then and there. The devotee's fate for seven lives was thereby abridged into a few seconds. With the boon of the Goddess, he came out of the temple a genius, and assumed a new name, Kalidasa —the servant of Goddess Kali.

Thus goes the legend about India's third greatest poet, next only to Valmiki and Vyasa. The legend is not likely to be true. But it shows in what esteem the popular mind holds Kalidasa. So great was his genius that it could not have been possible short of a direct boon from Goddess Saraswati. Kalidasa is a phenomenon, a miracle. And as the popular mind always does, to highlight the miracle, it has imagined him to have been a fool earlier, for sake of contrast.

Kalidasa lived in Ujjayini, the glorious city of the Malavas, during a golden age of India's history. The legendary King



Vikramaditya was his patron. Eight other great scholars were his colleagues in the court. They were Dhanvantari (Physician), Ghatakarpura, Sanku and Vetalabhatta (poets), Amarasimha (lexicographer), Varahamihira (astrologer), Vararuchi (author and grammarian) and Kshapanaka.

Kalidasa's plays and poetry, written about two thousand years ago, continue to be among the finest products of Indian inspiration. Although they are in Sanskrit, there is no literature of any language in India which has not been influenced by them. His known works are *Sakuntalam*, *Malavikagnimitra*, *Vikramorvasi*, *Meghaduta*, *Raghuvamsa*, *Ritu-samhara* and

Kumara-sambhava.

Kalidasa knew India very well. In his works we find the glimpses of all the parts of the country. He takes us to "saffron-tinted" Kashmir, to Malabar where betel creepers abound, to the pearl fisheries of Tamraparni (in the south of Tamil Nadu), to the Himalayas abounding in deodars and Kalinga bedecked in coconut palms, to the glittering sands of the Indus and the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna, and so on and so forth.

As Sri Aurobindo wrote, "Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa are the essence of the history of ancient India; if all else were lost, they would still be its sole and sufficient cultural history."

WONDER WITH COLOURS





New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

THE MAN OF MIRACLES

The night was dark. Flashes of lightning revealed terrible faces all around. Thunder-claps echoed in the distant hills. Hyenas laughed and jackals howled. But, with firm steps King Vikram returned to the old tree. He climbed it and brought the corpse that hung from its top branch down. Then, with the corpse on his shoulder, as he began crossing the cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, I suppose you are taking these troubles with the intention of gaining some supernatural power. But know this, O King, supernatural power does not necessarily make one happy. Let me tell you the story of Maitreya in order to drive the point home."

The vampire went on: This happened long ago. Pratapaditya was then the King of Ujjain. He had a gifted artist in his court named Kanakaksha.



The artist's younger brother, Maitreya, lived in the Himalayas since his childhood. From a certain yogi he learnt the secret of a miracle. The yogi of course had warned him that it was undesirable to perform any miracle for impressing or influencing the worldly people. But, after the yogi's death, Maitreya left the Himalayas and arrived at Ujjain.

Kanakaksha was delighted to get back his younger brother. He presented Maitreya before the king. Kanakaksha had just completed drawing the portrait of a horse. Maitreya, by his supernatural power, breathed

life into the portrait. The portrait turned into a living horse!

The king and those present in the court were amazed. The king bestowed upon Maitreya the position of a courtier.

Soon the king and Maitreya became close friends. One day the king asked Kanakaksha, the artist, to draw a portrait of his. The artist gladly executed the order. In the evening the king sent the portrait to Maitreya's house with a request that he should breathe life into the portrait and lead the king's living replica to the palace at night.

Maitreya did as asked by the king. At midnight he led the king's dummy to the palace. It so happened that an enemy of the king was waiting for a chance to kill him. He mistook the king's dummy as the real king and shot an arrow aiming at the dummy. As Maitreya shouted for help several people gathered there. The king's dummy died. Maitreya explained to the shocked crowd that who lay dead was not the real king but only an illusory figure of his. But by the next day the rumour had spread all over Ujjain that he who died was

the real king. One who now sat on the throne was the king's dummy created by Maitreya. People further said that in fact it was Maitreya who ruled the kingdom, for, the dummy had no mind of his own!

Wherever Maitreya went he found people viewing him with awe. In front of shops and the royal officers, people talked about it in whispers. At first both Maitreya and the king ignored such gossips. But they could not help feeling quite uneasy about it.

The Ministers showed greater respect to Maitreya and looked at the king with contempt in their eyes. Try as they might neither the king nor Maitreya could feel free with the people.

Gradually even the members of the royal family began to view the king with suspicion. That was quite a painful experience for the king. Maitreya too suffered much pain because of the king's agony.

One day Maitreya met the king privately and told him, "I have found out a way to get out of this knotty situation. I have got a portrait of mine drawn by my brother. Tonight I will breathe life into it. Tomorrow you should summon my dummy



to the court and accuse him of conspiracy against yourself and hang him."

"What will you do while I hang your dummy?" asked the king.

"After breathing life into the portrait, I will leave for the Himalayas tonight itself," said Maitreya.

The king looked sad. Still, after thinking over the proposal for a long time, he agreed to it.

At night Maitreya breathed life into his own portrait and left Ujjain under the cover of darkness. In the morning, at the king's order, Maitreya's living dummy was arrested and

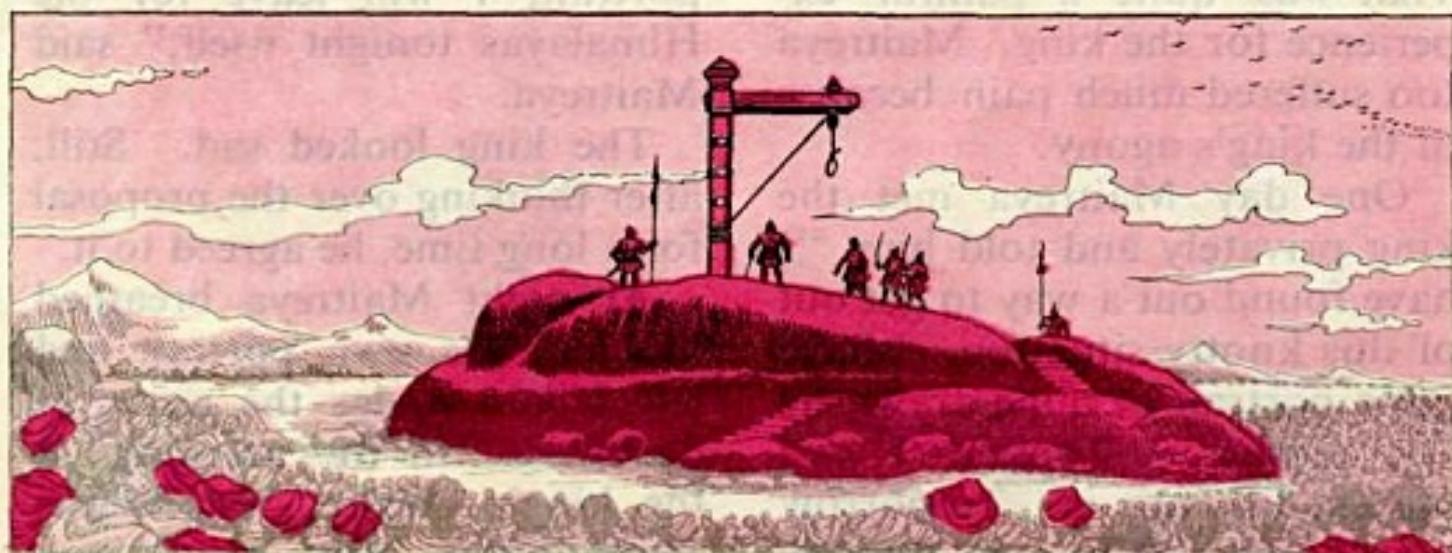
brought to the court. The king accused him of conspiracy and ordered him to be hanged. The order was duly executed. All were under the impression that the one hanged was the real Maitreya, for Maitreya was to be seen no more. The gossip that the king who ruled was not the real king died down.

The vampire paused for a moment and then challenged the king to answer: "Why did Maitreya show his miracle in the court when his guru had warned him against it? In what way did Maitreya's plan help the king? Why did Maitreya go away to the Himalayas? Speak out the answers, if you can, O King. If you know the answers and yet choose to keep mum, your head shall roll off your neck!"

Answered King Vikram:

"Maitreya had a great desire to impress others. Hence he showed his miracle at the court. But when he realised that his miracle has caused the king great agony, he invented the plan according to which the king hanged his dummy. People thought that the real Maitreya was killed. They realised that the king was the real king. For, the dummy king who, as the rumour went, was being guided by Maitreya, could not have passed the order to hang Maitreya. So far as Maitreya was concerned, his temporary eagerness to become famous through his miracles had dried up. He thought it best to depart to the Himalayas."

As soon as the king finished giving the answer, the vampire, along with the corpse, slipped away.





TWO FRIENDS

In Iran lived two friends, woodcutters by profession. From the forest they carried chopped wood to the market. The money they got by selling the wood was enough for them to make both ends meet, but not enough to ensure a comfortable living for their families. They often discussed possible ways to grow rich. But no way seemed smooth enough.

Ibrahim believed in God. He was not prepared to do anything which would go against the principles of truth. But Ismail's attitude was quite different. He was ever ready to grab at any opportunity that came his way.

One day, while chopping

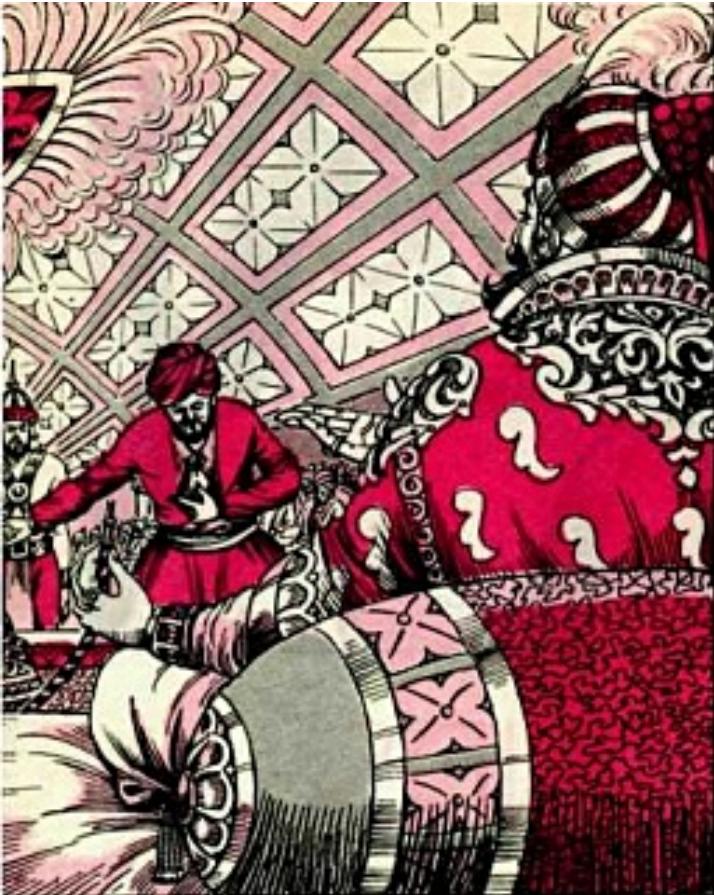
wood, Ismail said, "At times people come across wealth hidden or buried in the forest. I wish we could lay our hands on some such property!"

"That is hardly any gain," replied Ibrahim. "The law says that the king is the rightful owner of all such wealth."

"The law says so for fools!" commented Ismail.

The two friends had cut down a tree each. But it was already evening. They left for their homes, to return there the next day when they could chop the trunks of the trees into pieces.

Next day they resumed work as usual. Suddenly, as Ibrahim split the trunk of his tree with his axe, he could not check



himself from giving out a shriek. Inside the trunk was seen a jar of gold, filled with gold coins.

He ran to Ismail and told him what he had discovered.

"But what are you going to do with it?" asked Ismail.

"What I should do is clear. I must carry the jar to the king and offer it to him!" replied Ibrahim.

"Fool! Should you not rather change your own destiny by the help of the wealth?" asked Ismail.

"If my destiny is to change, it should change even if I stuck to the path of truth. I do not wish my destiny to change in a

wrong way," replied Ibrahim.

Ibrahim returned to his jar. He was a bit surprised to see that Ismail even did not care to come and have a look at the jar. However, he hid the jar in a bundle of log and proceeded to meet the king.

The king was very happy with Ibrahim. He accepted the jar and gave Ibrahim a reward of a thousand gold coins.

Ibrahim returned to his village a rich man. He bought a new house and opened a shop in the nearest bazar. But, a few days later, he heard that his friend Ismail had been arrested by the police. It was alleged that he had deceived a certain merchant with counterfeit gold coins.

Ibrahim rushed to the king's court and pleaded for Ismail's release. The king smiled and told his courtiers: "Here is an interesting case of two friends, one a man of truth and the other an ordinary greedy man. One day the two friends were debating on the issue of hidden property. I happened to be nearby in disguise. In order to test them, I managed to lodge two jars with coins in the logs which they were to chop. Neither the jars nor their con-



tents were real gold though they seemed so. One jar reached me. The other one with its content found its way to the market. The man who brought the jar to me turned into a prosperous merchant. The man who took the jar to the market with the hope of becoming rich

is now a prisoner."

All were quite amused. However, the king released Ismail at Ibrahim's prayer. Ibrahim asked Ismail to join him in his business. Ismail was too happy to do that. Both prospered well.

Vijay was narrating his dream to his friend, Raman : "I found a tumblerful of milk. I was very happy. I lighted my stove in order to warm up the milk. But my dream ended and I woke up before I had taken the milk down."

"You fool," chided Raman, "you should have drunk up the milk cold!"

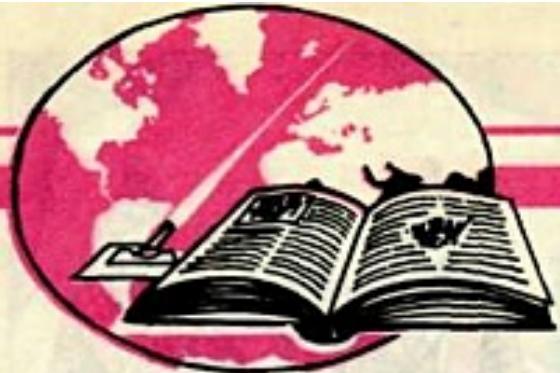
★ ★ ★

Some people are so funny that they will believe you if you say that there are 270,678,934,341 stars in the universe. But if they see 'Fresh Paint' warning on a wall or a bench, they must touch it in order to believe it!

★ ★ ★

An elephant saw a mouse for the first time and exclaimed, "My God! What a small creature!"

"No doubt a nasty fever has affected my health. You should have seen me last week!" retorted the mouse.



THE YOUTH WHO SOLD HIS SOUL TO DEVIL - DR. FAUSTUS

In olden days, Wittenberg in Germany was a famous seat of learning. Faustus was one of the young men who studied there. But unlike others, he was not satisfied with the study of the usual subjects like philosophy, law and medicine. He wanted to muster such knowledge which could make him more powerful than even the emperors.

His ambition led him to study magic and necromancy. He made a contract with Lucifer, the arch-devil. According to the contract, Lucifer was to put Mephistopheles, one of his assistants, at the disposal of Faustus, for twentyfour years. Mephistopheles was to serve Faustus and satisfy his fancy and whims in the supernatural way. After twentyfour years the soul of Faustus was to serve Lucifer for

all eternity!

Faustus thus became famous as "the wonder of the world for magic art," in a short time. He could perform amazing miracles. He made the spirit of Alexander the Great appear before the German emperor. And, when a certain duke ridiculed him, he, by his magic, grew a pair of horns on his head.

Not only that, for satisfying his own curiosity he makes the legendary Helen of Troy appear before him. On looking at her, he exclaims, "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Ilium?"

Thus he spends twentyfour years in great excitement. But when the period ends and he realises that he has to remain in hell for eternity, he repents

and cries for help. He sees the vision of Christ and God, but his contract with Lucifer cannot be annulled. Even as he cries out, "Ugly hell, gape not! Come not, Lucifer; I'll burn my books!" he is dragged away by Lucifer.

It was Christopher Marlowe (1564—1593), the English play-

wright of Shakespeare's time, who wrote a highly interesting play on the legend of Faustus. The legend emphasises that our quest for knowledge and power should be natural. When we get them, we should make proper use of them. Idle curiosity, craving for power and its egoistic use dooms one's soul.



Too Sick To Receive Guests

An old couple lived in a certain village. Once the villagers decided to hold a fortnight-long fair around their temple.

Announcements were made accordingly. As the time for the fair approached, the couple became very pensive. It was because they were misers and they feared that relatives from distant places might visit the fair and come to stay as their guests.

And, this fear proved true. They saw two relatives heading towards the fair. At once they lay down on their beds, pretending to be sick.

In the evening the relatives came to pass their night at the couple's house. But they felt anxious at the couple's condition and left the place. As true well-wishers, they sent word to all the other relatives of the couple saying that they must rush to the couple's bedside if they wished to see the couple for the last time.

Two days later the couple had ten anxious visitors from far away places. The visitors were happy to see that the old couple had recovered! But since there was a fair going on, they stayed on in the couple's house for a week to enjoy it.





The World of Magic

RETURN OF ROOPRANI

Devapal, the king of Rajgarh, had gone to inspect the frontier of his kingdom. While returning to his palace through a forest, he happened to see a beautiful damsel weeping under a tree.

The king got off his horse and asked the damsel, "Who are you? What makes you sit here alone and weep?"

"My name is Mohini. I lived in the far end of this forest. A giant devoured my parents. I alone have escaped. I was not married. Hence I have no place to go."

The king was so charmed by the young lady that he immediately proposed, "In that case, why not accompany me? I will be delighted if you consent to

marry me!"

The young lady blushed and said in a whisper, "I am willing to marry you upon the condition that I will be allowed to have my way in everything. Nobody should question or check me!"

"I accept the condition," said the king. He summoned a palanquin and carried the young lady to his palace.

The king had already had a queen named Rooprani. Because Rooprani had failed to give birth to any child, the king had decided to marry again. What he did not know was that Rooprani was already pregnant.

However, the noble Rooprani welcomed Mohini like her own sister. The king and Mohini



were duly married. Rooprani instructed the maids of the palace to ensure that the younger queen was not inconvenienced on any account.

But Mohini's attitude to Rooprani was quite different. She was extremely jealous of her although she never showed it in her behaviour.

When it was time for Rooprani to give birth to her child, Mohini told the king, "Nobody excepting myself should be present near the elder queen at the time of the delivery."

The enchanted king passed the necessary order which suited Mohini's whim.

When Rooprani experienced the labour pain, all her maids and nurses had to leave her room. Mohini alone remained with her. The king waited outside the queen's apartment with anxiety and curiosity.

An hour later Mohini rang the bell. That was the indication calling the king in.

But what a shock awaited the king! Rooprani lay senseless. Beside her was seen a duck of wax.

"O King! Look at your heir yonder! Give it a kiss," said Mohini with a giggle.

"I don't understand what you say or what I see," murmured the king.

"Well, this is all your dear elder queen has given birth to—a duck of wax!" explained Mohini.

The king left the apartment without a word more. He remained gloomy and refused to see Rooprani. The only person he talked to was Mohini. And Mohini soon succeeded in convincing the king that Rooprani was a curse to him and that she had humiliated him by giving birth to a funny toy!

One day the king sent word to Rooprani that he would count it a blessing if she left the

palace.

The broken-hearted Rooprani immediately complied with the king's desire. She went into a forest and lived in a deserted hut.

But it was not necessary for her to remain sorry for long. Soon after her arrival in the forest a holy man who lived nearby met her, carrying a child in his arms.

"My daughter! This is your child. As soon as it was born, Mohini, the witch, sent it out of the palace through a secret passage. Her servant who brought it here with the instruction to kill it, suddenly saw me

watching her. Taking fright, she left the child alive and fled. Now, my daughter, take charge of your son. You will soon see good days again."

Under the holy man's care the queen and the infant prince lived happily.

As days passed, the king had to contend with a series of unforeseen troubles. His elephants, horses and cattle died for no apparent reasons. There was drought in the kingdom. Fire broke out at several places and the people lived in a state of panic. The king himself fell sick.

One evening the holy man met





the king's minister and confided to him all the misdeeds of Mohini. He also explained to him why the king and the kingdom were having so many troubles. The minister was horrified to learn that Mohini, in fact, was a witch. She had married the king with the sole motive of destroying him as well as his kingdom.

The holy man then handed over to the minister a duck made of wax, a piece of iron, a stick of magnet and a small loaf of bread. He inserted the iron into the duck's beak and the magnet into the bread. He then told the minister what he was to do.

Next day, when the king to the court, the minister proposed to show him something amusing. The king became curious. The minister brought a huge cauldron filled with water and then floated the wax duck on it.

Holding the loaf of bread, the minister asked the king, "My lord! Can this wax duck feel any temptation for this bread?"

"How can a wax duck feel anything, my wise minister?" asked the king.

"My lord, if a woman can give birth to a wax duck, a wax duck can also show feelings. The truth is, both are impossible to happen. But things which cannot really happen might appear to happen!" observed the minister and he held the bread closer to the duck's beak. The duck moved, as if attracted towards the bread. Needless to say, the magnet hidden in the bread pulled the iron hidden in the duck's beak.

As the king marvelled at the magic, the holy man entered the court, followed by Rooprani and her son. In the meanwhile news of the magic had reached Mohini and she had come into the court. The holy man uttered



a mantra and sprinkled a little water on her. Instantly she changed into a crow, gave out a hoarse cawing, and flew away.

To the amazed king, the holy man and his minister explained the happenings. His joy knew no bound when he got back his

true queen and the little prince. With the return of Rooprani, who was pious and pure, luck returned to the king and the kingdom. The king recovered from his sickness and there was good rain followed by a bumper crop all over the kingdom.

—*By A. C. Sorcer, Magician*

Life is easy to live for a shameless man, a bully, a mischief-maker and an idler; life is hard to live for a modest, honest man who looks for what is pure, who is disinterested, quiet and intelligent.

—*The Dhammapada*

Long is the night to him who is awake; long is a mile to him who is tired; and long is life to the ignorant who does not know the true law of life.

—*The Dhammapada*

TO PLEASE THE DEITY

The people of Sompur built a temple and employed a priest to perform the rituals for the deity.

The priest was a greedy fellow and he knew that the villagers were deeply devoted to the deity. He planned to take advantage of their devotion and extract from them a few things for himself.

One day he did not report for his work in the temple. Late in the afternoon the leading villagers came to enquire what the matter was.

“Last night the deity appeared before me and said that He did not like to see His priest poorly dressed. I must wear silk and put on a gold chain if I am to please the deity. That is the deity’s instruction,” said the priest.

The villagers sat in a meeting and decided upon a course of action. They appointed as their priest a wealthy Brahmin who always donned a silk **dhoti** and had a gold chain to wear!





VEER HANUMAN

On the particular hill in the Himalayas, Veer Hanuman looked for the medicinal plants. But all the plants looked more or less alike. How to distinguish the medicinal ones from the ordinary? However, he did not worry about it for long. He stooped down and uprooted the entire hill and raising it high with one hand, flew back to Lanka.

It was a wonderful scene. All who could see Hanuman flying like that marvelled at his power. The hill on his hand cut through layers of cloud, reflecting the rays of the sun, it looked like a mound of gold.

When the Vanaras could see

Hanurhan on the horizon, they gave out loud cheers. Hanuman too, coming nearer, joined them in the joyous uproar. Then he descended and unburdened himself of the hill and greeted the elder Vanaras.

The fragrance of the medicinal plants, spread by the swift breeze, was enough to bring Rama and Lakshmana back to consciousness. The same happened to numerous Vanaras. Even the dead Vanaras were restored to life. Such was the efficacy of the breeze that carried the smell of the plants! The breeze would have given life to the dead demons too. But Ravana had ordered for the corpses of his soldiers to be



thrown into the sea so that his surviving soldiers were not disheartened at the sight of the large number of their dead fellow-demons.

Hanuman carried the hill back to the Himalayas again and set it down on the right spot.

Sugriva told Hanuman upon the latter's return: "Kumbhakarna, the mighty brother of Ravana, has been vanquished. One of Ravana's sons too has been killed. The demon-king is drowned in sorrow. This is the time to strike terror into the hearts of the demons. We must invade the fort tonight and take the demons by surprise."

Accordingly, when it was quite dark, the Vanaras suddenly made a dash into Ravana's fort. Their torches burning bright, their fearful screams seemed to shake the fort to its very foundation. The demons were not at all prepared for such an invasion. They ran helter-skelter in the darkness and cried for help. The Vanaras were further inspired at the plight of their adversaries. They set fire to house after house as they advanced.

Several battalions of demon soldiers, although not fully prepared, rushed forward to face the enemy. Battles were fought in the labyrinths of the huge fort.

Clamours and clangs were echoed in the high towers.

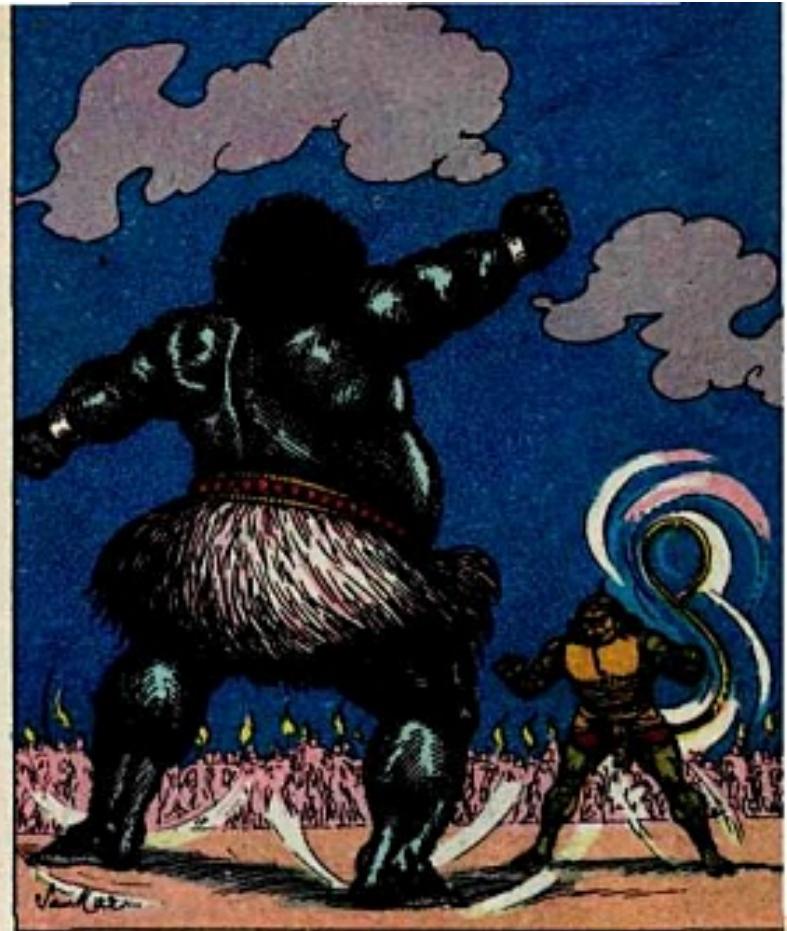
When the noise reached the apartment of Ravana and he could see the flames spreading over several parts of the fort, he ordered Kumbha and Nikumbha, the sons of Kumbhakarna, to go out and repulse the enemy. The two brothers went out at once, accompanied by Yupaksha, Sonitaksha, Prajangha and Kampana.

With the appearance of these demon heroes on the vast ground inside the parapet of

the fort, the battle took a grave turn. However, Kampana was killed by Angada before long. Encouraged by his own success. Angada leaped towards Sonitaksha and snatched away his sword and beheaded him with the same weapon. Next to fall to his terrible attack was Prajangha. In the meanwhile the demon Yupaksha had been killed by Maind.

But soon the furious Kumbha confronted Angada. Although Angada fought back bravely, he had been tired and at one point he swooned away. Rama who observed his condition from some distance, at once sent Jamvaban and a few other heroes to his rescue. But it was extremely difficult for them to advance through the unceasing shower of arrows from Kumbha's gigantic bow. Sugriva could appreciate the gravity of the situation. He took a jump and stood before Kumbha and took hold of his bow and obliged him to part with it. Then both wrestled for a while at the end of which Kumbha was found lying flat on the ground. Soon he breathed his last.

When Nikumbha saw the death of his brother he shook



with fury and suddenly hurled a heavy mace at Hanuman. The mace was shattered to pieces, but, no doubt, Hanuman felt its impact. He returned the treat by planting a terrible blow on Nikumbha's chest. Nikumbha fell down, vomitting blood, but he stood up again the very next moment and attacked Hanuman, mustering all his vigour. Hanuman took hold of the demon's head and did not let it go until the demon became motionless. He then threw Nikumbha on the ground. The demon lay still, never to stir again!

Ravana was shocked to hear of the death of the sons of



Kumbhakarna. He immediately summoned Meghnad and ordered him to go to face the enemy.

Meghnad decided to perform a very special rite before going out. The battle was now being fought on the vast ground outside the fort. Meghnad chose a relatively safe place behind the fort and sat down for the rite. He invoked a number of spirits and appeased them. Certain of his victory, he went out to fight, but went invisible.

Soon an unceasing shower of arrows fell on Rama and Lakshmana. Although they too sent up equally powerful arrows, Meghnad remained unhurt, by

swaying rapidly in the sky, never visible. A large number of Vanaras lost consciousness or died due to Meghnad shooting his arrows incessantly.

"Let me discharge the Weapon of Brahma, thereby destroying the entire race of the demons!" said Lakshmana angrily.

"No, Lakshmana, if we are fighting against Meghnad, we should devise ways to kill him, not the entire race of demons," said Rama.

Suddenly Meghnad departed into the fort. He had been taken up by a new idea. He must create a fake Sita by his magic and pretend killing her right before the enemy. That should throw Rama and Lakshmana into a terrible depression. And depression should lead them to defeat.

When Meghnad re-entered the arena, this time visible to all and standing on a chariot, Hanuman and a number of other Vanaras rushed at him. Hanuman was about to hurl a massive rock at him when he noticed, by the demon's side, the fake Sita in tears.

Hanuman threw the rock down and demanded of Meghnad, "What is this? Why have

you dragged Sita Devi into the battle-field? What is your intention?"

Meghnad pulled the fake Sita by her hair and answered, 'Well, it is for this Sita that we are fighting. Why not I put an end to her life? Thereafter the passage to our victory should prove smooth!"

"Shut up, you arch-sinner! I will leave no trace of your person if you carry out your nefarious design!" shouted Hanuman. But Meghnad laughed and pretended to kill the fake Sita. Then he gave out a terribly loud cry of joy.

The Vanaras, terrified, were about to show their backs to the wild demon. But Hanuman checked them and exhorted them to face the enemy boldly. Encouraged, the Vanaras attacked the demons with redoubled fury.

Hanuman picked up the rock which he had dropped beforehand and hurled it at Meghnad's chariot. Meghnad's charioteer of course saved the chariot, giving it a swift turn. However, a number of demons were crushed to death by the rock. But after a while, Hanuman told the Vanaras, "Indeed, we were fighting for the sake of



Sita Devi. Now that she is no more, I do not know what should be the right course of action for us. Let us go and inform Rama and Sugriva all about Meghnad's mischief."

Meghnad was happy to see that the Vanaras were going away. He hurried into the fort and headed towards a certain spot where he desired to perform a more elaborate rite, with the sacrifice of blood in the fire. His victory should be ensured if he could duly complete the rite.

In the meanwhile, as instructed by Rama, the army of bears, under Jamvaban's leadership, was coming to help Hanuman in his battle against

Meghnad. Hanuman met the army on his way to Rama.

Together they appeared before Rama and told him that Sita had been killed by Meghnad. No sooner had Rama heard the news than he swooned away. A number of Vanara heroes encircled him and some of them tried to revive him by sprinkling perfumed water on him.

Lakshmana sat down near Rama and lamented, "You have always stuck to the path of truth. It is your sense of duty that made you sacrifice the throne and seek shelter in the forest. You have never for a moment thought ill of others. Yet, there is no end to your troubles. It seems, truthfulness has no place in this world where the unjust triumphs!"

Rama had got back his con-

sciousness by the time Vibhishana arrived there. Upon hearing everything, Vibhishana said, "O Ramachandra! There is no truth in this report. Ravana, who refused to surrender Sita Devi to you, was not at all likely to allow her to be killed by his son. Surely, Meghnad desires to complete his penance without any disturbance. That is why he gave us a shock so that we would remain bewildered and brooding for some time. But he must not be allowed to proceed with his plan. If he gets the chance to complete his rite smoothly, he shall grow invincible. Let Lakshmana follow me. I will show where Meghnad is performing his rite. Lakshmana should not only foil his scheme, but also kill him.

—Contd.





THE PRICE OF GRAIN

It happened a few centuries ago. The kingdom of Kamboj had had a good crop. But the price of the food grain suddenly began to rise. The people complained about it to the king. The king asked his ministers what the reason of the steep rise in the price could be. They put forward several theories; but the king was not satisfied.

In order to reduce the hardship of the people the king started giving monetary help to everyone who went to buy grain. But he soon realised that that was not the solution. When the people were given help, the price of the grain increased further.

Some priests advised the king

to perform certain religious rites. The king did as advised. But the rites had hardly any effect on the price.

At last the king summoned all the leading grain merchants of Kamboj and ordered them to bring down the price of the grain. But they said in one voice that that was beyond their power. "The kingdom needs more grain than it can produce. That is why we have to import grain from other lands at a high price. How can we sell the thing cheap?" they explained.

The king was not convinced. He had received reports of bumper crop in some areas of his kingdom while nowhere the crop had failed altogether.

Why then should the supply of grain be less than the demand? He was afraid, the merchants had suppressed their stocks of grain, and they created an artificial shortage in the market.

"Whatever be the position," said the king, "I want you to sell the grain at the price fixed by us! If you don't, you will be taken to task."

The merchants returned, sullen and silent. But their shops were found shut the next day. When customers cried for grain, they were sold the stuff through the rear doors, at the usual high—if not higher—price.

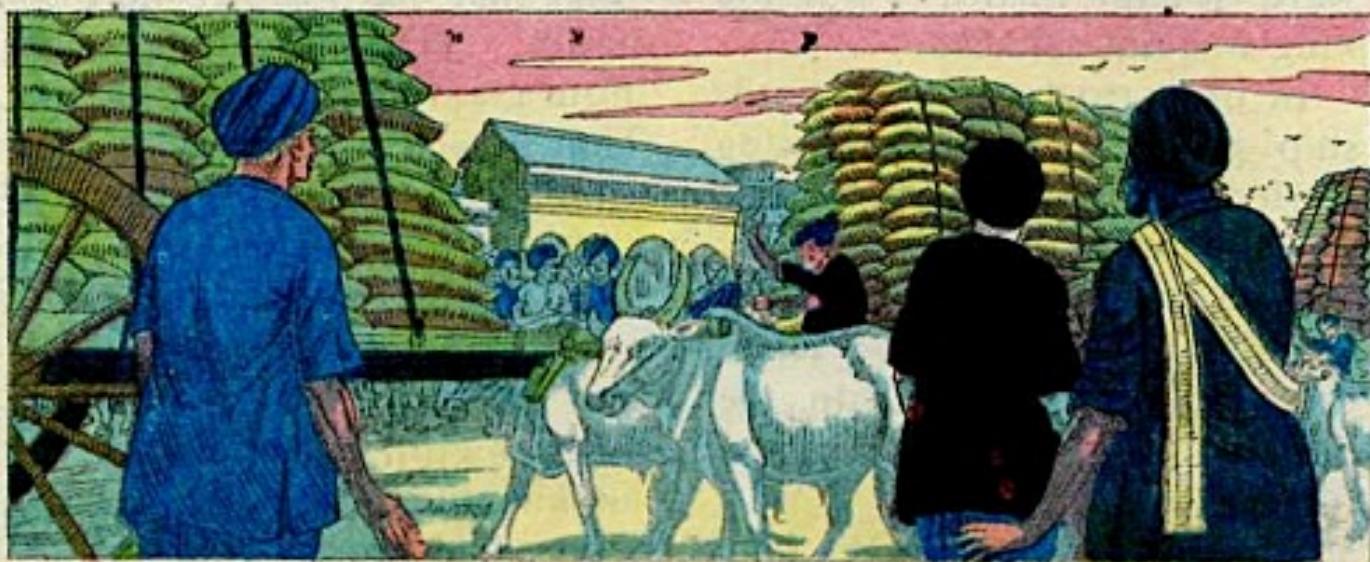
The king did not know what to do. When he sat pensive, Ravi, the son of one of his ministers, went up to him and said, "My lord! I have an humble plan to solve the prob-

lem." The king looked at him inquisitively and Ravi told him what his plan was. The king looked glad.

The same day it was announced that grain should be available soon at cheap rate and in plenty, for the king had purchased hundreds of tons of grain from the neighbouring lands. The announcement continued for two days and on the third day people saw a number of loaded carts entering the capital.

The same evening the price of grain went down by half! The merchants who had stored them now knew that they will rot in their godowns unless sold as soon as possible.

The crisis was over. The bags which had been unloaded inside the palace contained only husk!





THE UNDAUNTED DHARMADAS

Dharmadas was the sentry who guarded the palace gate. He seemed to be most dutiful and alert. One day it occurred to the raja that the poor sentry must be feeling quite tired checking the stream of visitors to the palace.

"I will post a second sentry here. That should put you at ease," the raja informed Dharmadas.

"It is not at all necessary, my lord. I'm sufficiently capable of managing the work," Dharmadas said with some anxiety. But even then the kind raja appointed a second sentry at the gate.

The cause of Dharmadas's anxiety was rooted in his dea-

ling with the visitors. Under some pretext or the other he stopped many of them at the gate or created some hurdle on their way to meeting the king. But as soon as a visitor gave him a tip, he made everything smooth.

The new sentry did not approve of this habit of Dharmadas. "I will report your corruption to the king," he threatened.

"Corruption? I had never heard the word! Is it not you, who demand money from the visitors?" Dharmadas shouted at his colleague. The new sentry was taken aback. Just then some gentlemen were crossing the gate. Dharmadas stopped them and asked, "Tell me, gentle-



men, you have been seeing me here for the last twenty years. Have I ever demanded any bribe from you? Please speak out if I have!"

Each of those gentlemen had been obliged to pay bribe to Dharmadas on some occasion or the other. But looking at the small crowd around them, nobody was willing to confess that. They said in one voice, "Oh, who does not know that Dharmadas is as honest as a saint!"

The new sentry stood stunned. Now it was Dharmadas's turn to threaten him, saying, "I'm going to tell the raja that

you were trying to extract money from me!"

His colleague, being new to the raja's service, was sufficiently terrified to give Dharmadas a fifth of the monthly salary he had received that day. That was not enough. Dharmadas extracted a similar amount from him every month.

But the new sentry's wife was too smart to allow Dharmadas to bully her husband. She straight went to the raja and requested him to find out what happened to a fifth of her husband's salary month after month.

The raja summoned the new sentry and soon found out the truth. Annoyed with Dharmadas, he transferred him to another post. Now it was Dharmadas's duty to ring the bell to mark the beginning and the end of the daily work in the various offices of the king.

To indicate that a day's work was over, Dharmadas was required to ring the bell at the sunset. But soon several employees requested him to ring the bell before the sunset so that they could go home early. Accordingly Dharmadas rang the bell an hour earlier every day and received regular tips

from the happy employees.

Six months passed. One day the bell rang while the raja was taking a walk in his garden. He observed that the sun was an hour away from touching the horizon!

The raja could instantly guess the situation. He appointed another man for ringing the bell. However, he did not want to deprive Dharmadas of his livelihood. He decided to put him in the household of his general where, under a strict master, he shall learn to behave!

Appointed as a servant to the general, Dharmadas worked humbly and dutifully for the first few days. But, one afternoon, as he was pruning the plants in the garden, he heard a scream coming from the inner apartment of the house. He tiptoed to the window and saw the general's wife shouting at her husband, heaping abuses on him. The general, who was feared by all, was conducting himself before her like a lamb before a wolf. As the amused Dharmadas looked on, the furious lady hit the general in the face with a toy.

The general looked doubly pale when he saw Dharmadas prying into the house. He went



out into the garden at once and whispered to the new servant, "Don't you ever speak a word about our quarrel to anybody."

"I will not, sir. But if the raja asks me how things are going on in his brave general's house, I've to speak the truth even if it were unpleasant for me to do so!" replied Dharmadas cunningly.

"No, fellow, you must not speak a word about it even to the raja," said the general as he pushed a coin into Dharmadas's palm.

"As you wish, my master!" said Dharmadas with a show of humility.



Thereafter Dharmadas received a small reward whenever the general was humiliated by his wife. Although Dharmadas did not say a word about it to anybody else, he could not check himself from boasting before his wife telling her how the general of the kingdom was afraid of him!

Dharmadas's wife soon passed on this bit of interesting news to some of her dear friends. In a few days it became the most sensational gossip in the town. At last it reached the ears of the raja. The raja was not at all happy to hear such humiliating stories about his

general. It did not take him long to find out who had spread the scandal. This time he dismissed Dharmadas from the royal service.

But Dharmadas did not despair. He collected four unemployed youths of the town and formed a team of reporters. It was the duty of these youths to roam about in the towns and to inform Dharmadas if they saw or heard anything unusual. Each youth was entrusted with a particular area of the town.

A month later, on a festive day, the raja lost his diamond ring. That was his most pre-

cious possession—a gift from the emperor. His servants searched for it everywhere. But it could not be traced.

Someone then said, "Maybe, Dharmadas would be able to give us a clue."

The raja summoned Dharmadas and asked him if he could help in finding out the lost ring.

"All I can do is to tell you if there was anything unusual on the day you lost your ring. Well, my lord, your pet elephant was found tied to a tree in a narrow lane and your mahout rushing towards his home. His wife was heard giving out a cry of joy and saying, 'A dozen silk sarees for me, no less! I have nothing more to report, my lord!'" said Dharmadas.

It was not at all natural for the elephant on which the raja

sat to be tied to a tree in a lane. The king called his mahout and, in a stern voice, asked, "Where is the diamond ring?"

The raja was only beating in the bush. But the mahout trembled with fear. Escorted by police, he went home and fetched the ring. It turned out that while the raja was descending from the elephant before the festival ground, the ring had slipped off his finger. The mahout had picked it up and had rushed home with the elephant to deposit it with his wife. He had been back near the festival by the time the raja was to come out.

The raja felt that he should not be deprived of Dharmadas's services. He absorbed him and his team of four in the detective section of his police force.





THE PROPHECY FULFILLED

Long ago, when the city of Puri was a great seat of learning, two friends, Suresh and Sudhir, were studying the scriptures there, under the care of worthy scholars.

Their study was over and they set out for their own land which was Vidarbha. On their way they faced a storm and took shelter in a deserted temple. Inside the temple they saw a hermit who sat absorbed in some astrological calculation.

The two friends greeted the hermit and offered him any service he might need. The hermit looked pleased. The two friends came to know that he belonged to Vidarbha and that he was on his way to

Kalinga.

"O wise hermit, I feel a great eagerness to learn something about the future of Vidarbha. Will you be pleased to tell me?" asked Sudhir.

"What is it that you desire to know, my son?" asked the hermit.

"The present King, Mahipal, and my father, were the two contenders for the throne of Vidarbha, upon the death of the old king. Although my father had a greater claim, Mahipal occupied the throne through crooked means. He later killed my father through a conspiracy. I should have tried to forget everything had Mahipal proved himself a good ruler.

But he has become a cruel tyrant. How long will he continue to torment the people?"

The hermit made some calculations and said, "Well, it is not my way to make prophecies. But I understand that you are suffering from an acute agony on account of Mahipal's injustice. You should be happy to hear that within a week from today King Mahipal is going to be assassinated. Not his assassin, but a new man will ascend the throne."

The storm subsided and the two friends took leave of the hermit. Sudhir walked, lost in some deep thought. Suresh observed, "You should not take the hermit's words very seriously. I do not believe in such prophecies. And, as you know, King Mahipal is so well protected that nobody would dare attempt killing him."

"Do you think so? In that case I should myself try to kill him, since astrologically it is the right time to make such an attempt," Sudhir said all of a sudden.

Suresh stood stunned for a minute. Then he tried his best to dissuade his friend from taking any such step. But Sudhir paid no heed to his



words and headed towards the capital of Vidarbha.

Suresh, worried for his friend, followed him without Sudhir knowing it.

Suresh did not care if the king was killed. But he knew for certain that Sudhir would be killed even if his attempt succeeded. He could not allow such a thing to happen. He kept a vigilant watch on Sudhir. On reaching the town, Sudhir lodged himself in a tavern. It was evening. Suresh proceeded to meet the king's minister forthwith.

He confided to the minister all that had happened and said,



"I will tell you where my friend is, provided you promise under oath that he will be left unharmed. All you have to do is to arrest him and detain him for a week. When the week was over, my friend's zeal to kill the king would weaken. Then you must free him."

The minister solemnly promised to leave Sudhir unharmed. Suresh then gave him the address of the tavern where Sudhir stayed and himself retired to a guest house near the palace.

But, to his horror, Suresh heard in the morning that Sudhir had already killed the

king at night and had been caught red-handed. Suresh ran to the minister and said, "Only if you had arrested my friend immediately, the king's life would have been spared. The king died because you did not act promptly. The fault is yours. I hope, you will keep your promise and let Sudhir go unharmed."

"We will duly consider your request," said the minister gravely and added, "Who could have thought that your friend would execute his plan so soon? Luckily, I was guarding the king myself and that is how the assassin could be captured."

Suresh felt extremely sad at the thought that had he not warned the minister his friend could have slipped away after killing the king. His action could not save the king while it endangered his friend's life!

Next day Suresh heard that the minister himself was going to be coronated the king. He had decided that the first thing he should do after his coronation was to hang Sudhir.

Suresh tried to meet the minister. But he was refused admission to his presence. He felt like going mad. However, he waited with great restraint.

On the day of the proposed coronation a great crowd collected in the royal court. The minister was seated near the throne. Suresh saw that his friend too had been brought there with his hands bound to hear the sentence.

Suddenly Suresh rushed forth and challenged the minister, "You have decided to hang Sudhir, have you?"

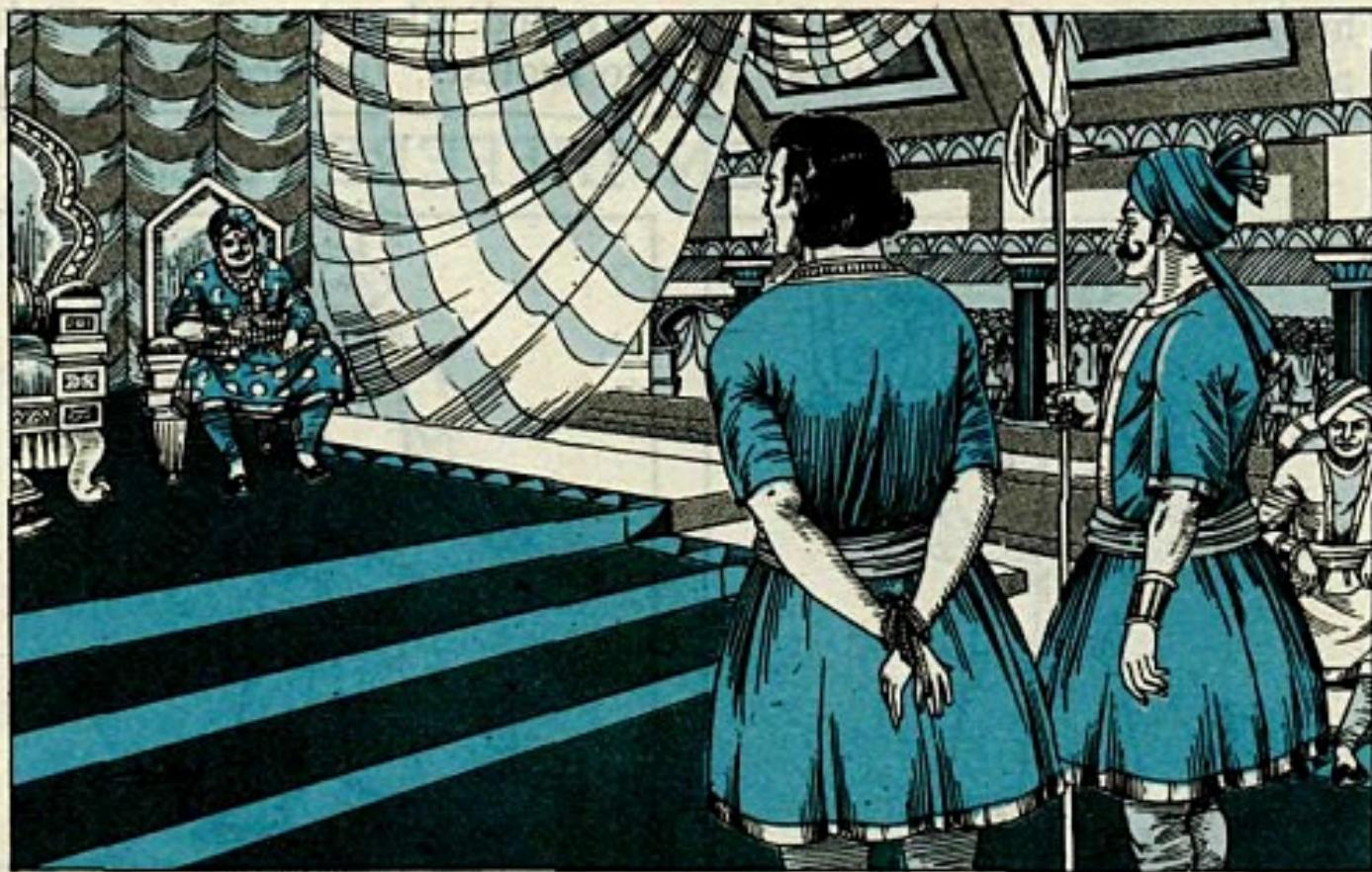
"Naturally. What else can be done to the king's murderer?" blurted out the minister.

"In that case I too should be hanged. But first let me deserve to be hanged," said Suresh and before anybody

could guess what he was doing, he had stabbed the minister to death.

For a moment there was a stunning silence in the court. Then, most unexpectedly for Suresh, the crowd broke into a thunderous applause. The fact was, the minister was a greater tyrant than the king. The king's mischiefs were inspired by the minister. The courtiers and the nobility were very happy that both the king and the minister were gone!

And the very next thing the courtiers did was to make Sudhir ascend the throne, for, his ancestors had a justified





claim to it.

And, needless to say, the very first action of Sudhir was to appoint Suresh his minister.

"I see, half of the hermit's prophecy came true. He had said that the king will be killed, but the one who will kill the king will not ascend the throne himself. The first part of the prophecy has turned true. I

wish, the second part would never turn true," observed Suresh.

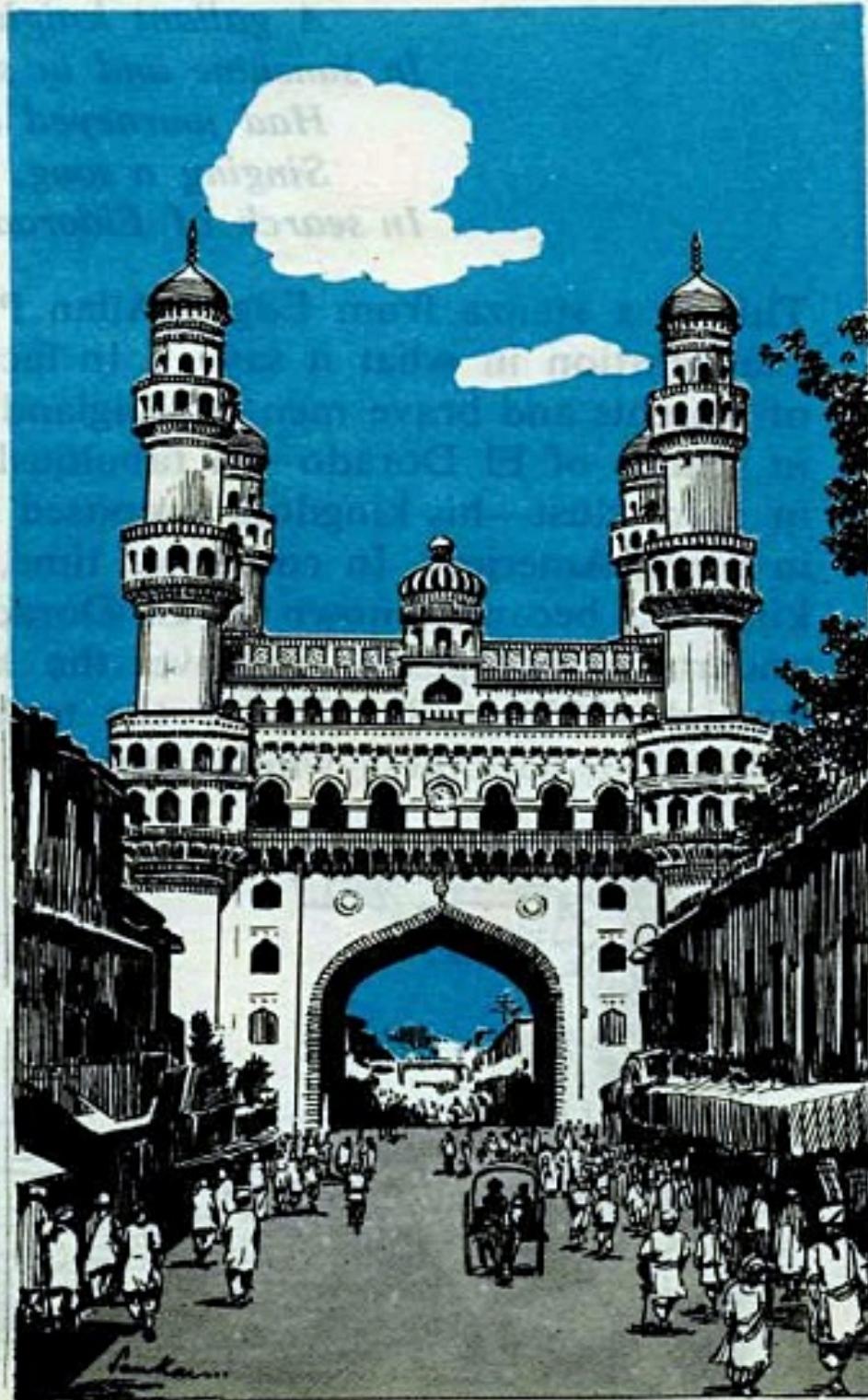
"The entire prophecy has turned true. I got no chance to kill the king. As soon as I approached him, the minister himself killed him and passed on the blame to me and got me arrested. I was too surprised to protest!" revealed Sudhir.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



One of the main cities of India, Hyderabad, is the capital of Andhra Pradesh. This beautiful city presents a pleasant blend of the various cultural strains of India, signifying unity in diversity.

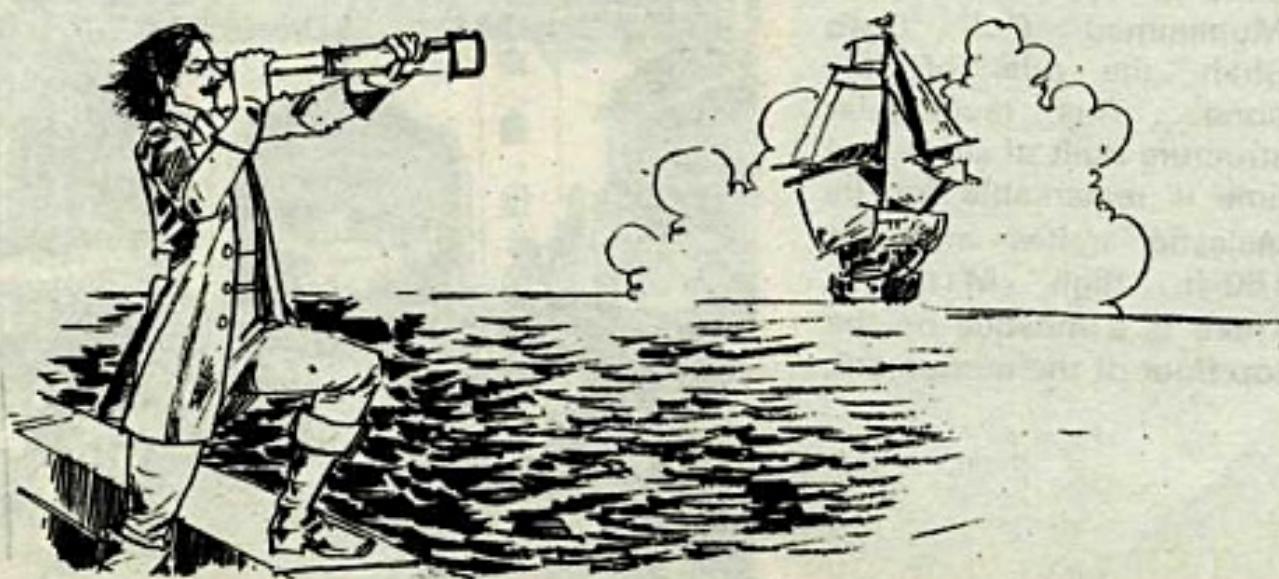
In the heart of the city is to be seen the Char Minar ("Four Towers"), built in 1591 by Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, the ruler of Golconda. This rectangular structure built of stone and lime is remarkable for its majestic arches and the 160-ft. high Minars. There is a mosque on the top floor of the monument.



EL DORADO

*Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight
In sunshine and in shadow
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.*

This is a stanza from Edgar Allan Poe. There is hardly any exaggeration in what it says. In fact, not one but a number of knights and brave men of England and Spain had gone out in search of El Dorado—a fabulously rich king who bathed in gold dust—his kingdom supposed to be situated somewhere in South America. In course of time, instead of the king, the kingdom became known as El Dorado. Among those who undertook voyages to discover the kingdom was Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618). Today the term means a place of great richness or happiness which generally eludes us.





LET US KNOW

"Where and when did the game of cricket originate?"

B. Narendran, Gill Nagar, Madras

Although England is the acknowledged birthplace of cricket, the game, in its various early forms, was perhaps played in some other countries too, in France in particular. The old French game, 'croquet', is believed by some to be an ancient form of the modern cricket.

However, there is no doubt that the game, as it is practised today, took shape and developed its style in England. It was already one of the popular 'bat and ball' games in the twelfth century, but its rules were first drawn up hundreds of years later, in 1744. Since 1788 it is the Marylebone Cricket Club (M.C.C.) of London which has continued to be recognised as the world's most authoritative framer of laws for this prestigious game.

The years 1873 and 1877 saw the first Test matches in Australia and England respectively.

The popular cricket term, "the ashes" (the winner retains the ashes), originated out of a mock obituary published in London *Sporting Times* when, in the England-Australia Test match held in 1882, England lost the match, short of 20 runs and with six wickets in hand. The paper then wrote: "In affectionate remembrance of English cricket which died at the Oval on 29th August. Deeply lamented by a large circle of sorrowing friends and acquaintances. The body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia."

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.

CHOOSE A TITLE AND WIN A REWARD

(You are invited to choose a title for the following story and write it down on a post card and mail it to 'Story-title Contest', Chandamama, 2 & 3, Arcot Road, Madras 600 026, to reach us by the 20th of May. A reward of Rs. 25-00 will go to the best entry, which will be published in the July issue. Please do not use the same card for entering the photo-caption contest.)



Harish and Subhas were classmates and neighbours. Harish had a mansion with an airy balcony. As their examination drew near, Harish invited Subhas to come to his balcony. There they could sit late into the night preparing their lessons together.

They read aloud their texts by turn. While reading aloud a book, Harish dozed off. But on waking up, he said, "Do not think that I had fallen asleep. The fact is, I had an appointment with Lord Ganapati. I went in my spirit to meet Him."

Subhas kept quiet. Next day, while reading aloud, Subhas too dozed off for a few seconds.

"Hey! What are you doing?" Harish shouted giving a shake to his friend.

"I too had an appointment with Lord Ganapati," Subhas quietly replied.

"Is that so? What did the Lord say?" asked Harish.

"The Lord said, 'How is it that I did not see your friend yesterday?' I kept mum," replied Subhas.

Result of Story Title Contest held in March Issue

The prize is awarded to :

Mr. Firoze J. Mehta,

22, Elgin Road,

Allahabad 211 001 (U.P.).

Winning Entry — 'DEATH BORROWS WINGS.'

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



- These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions ? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
- Rs. 20 will be awarded as prize for the best caption. Remember, your entry must reach us by 20th MAY.
- Winning captions will be announced in JULY Issue.
- Write your entry on a POST CARD, specify the month, give your full name address, age and post to :

**PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST
CHANDAMAMA MAGAZINE
MADRAS-600 026.**

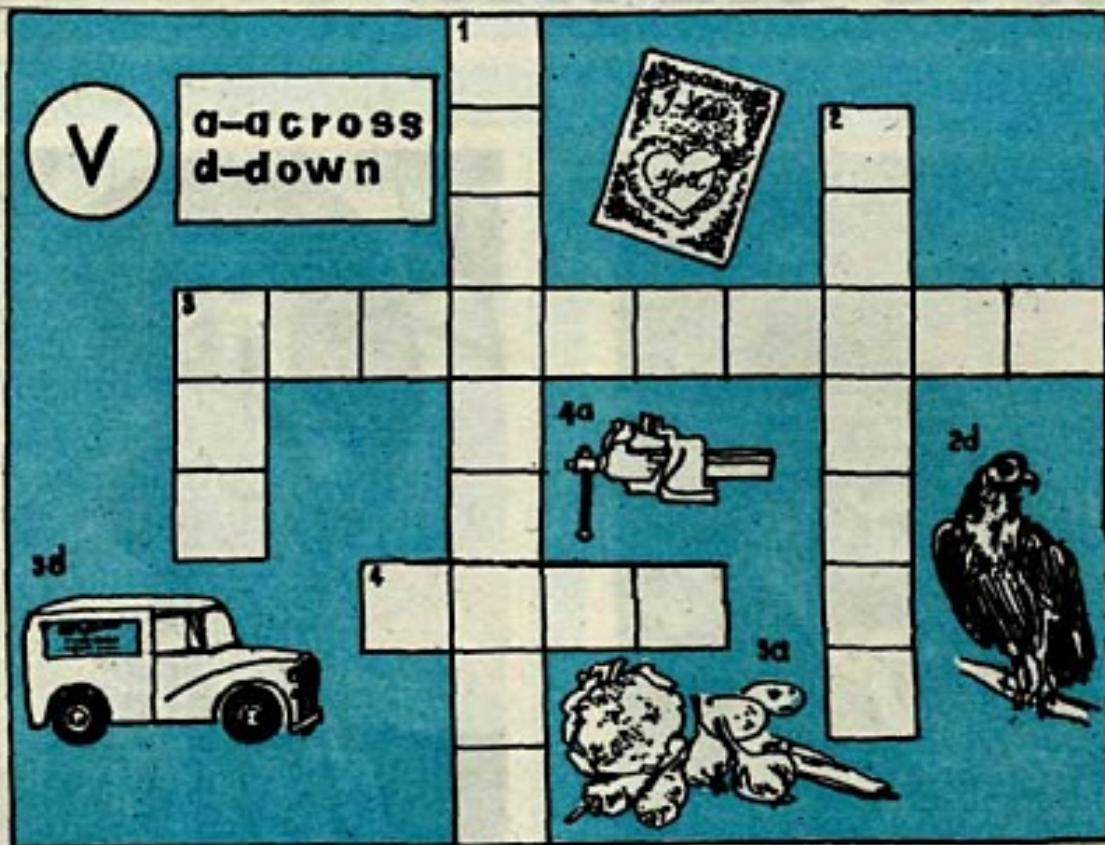
Result of Photo Caption Contest held in March Issue

The prize is awarded to :

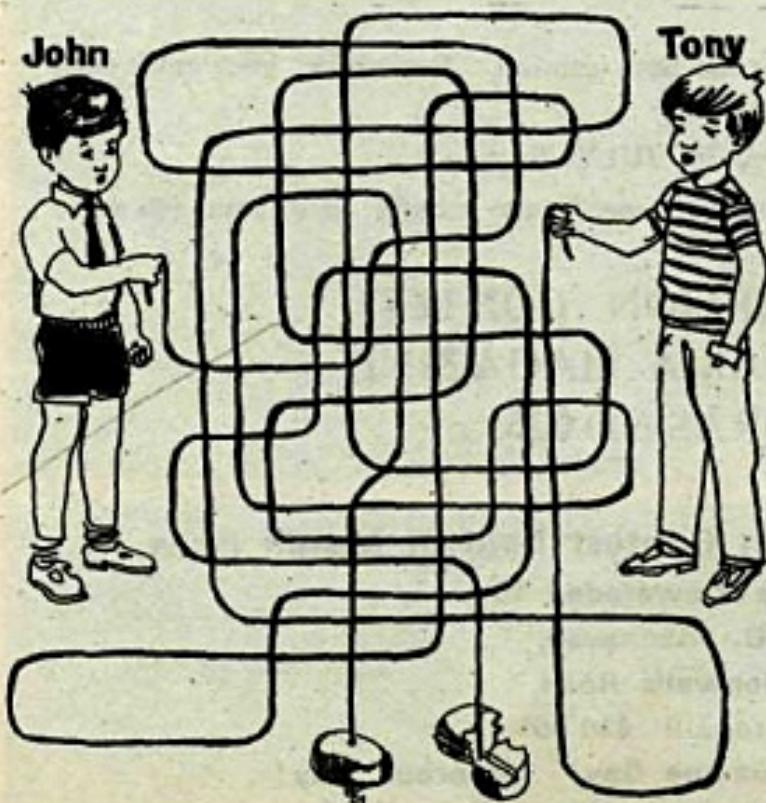
**Mr. G. Madhavan,
13, Benwell's Road,
Tiruchirapalli - 620 001.**

Winning Entry — 'Plumage Gay' - 'Amorous Play'

PUZZLE TIME



The clues in this month's picture crossword begin with the letter 'V'. Write your answers where shown by the numbers and letters.



The boy with the whole conker is the winner. Guess his name and trace along the strings to make sure.

Answers :
 ACROSS : Vegetable, Vice, Valentine,
 DOWN : Valentine, Van,
 Vulture; Van;



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15525 KHZ (19 M)
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7190 KHZ (41 M)

HINDI — Monday-Fri.
0600 to 1000 hrs.
1200 to 1400 hrs.
1400 to 2300 hrs.

through Saturday
11800 KHZ (25 M)
7190 KHZ (41 M)
11800 KHZ (25 M)
6075 KHZ (49 M)

HINDI — Sundays only
0600 to 1400 hrs.
1900 to 2300 hrs.

11800 KHZ (25 M)
7190 KHZ (41 M)
11800 KHZ (25 M)
6075 KHZ (49 M)

TAMIL — Daily
1830 to 1900 hrs.

11800 KHZ (25 M)
6075 KHZ (49 M)

MALAYALAM — Daily
1530 to 1630 hrs.

11800 KHZ (25 M)
6075 KHZ (49 M)

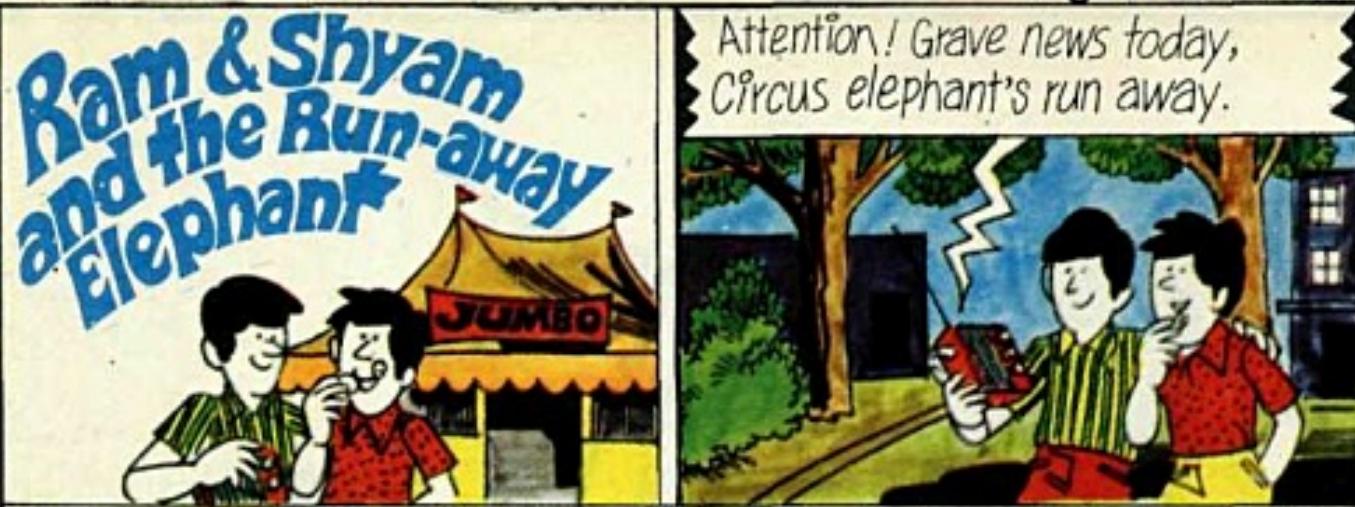
TELUGU — Daily
1430 to 1530 hrs.

11800 KHZ (25 M)
7190 KHZ (41 M)

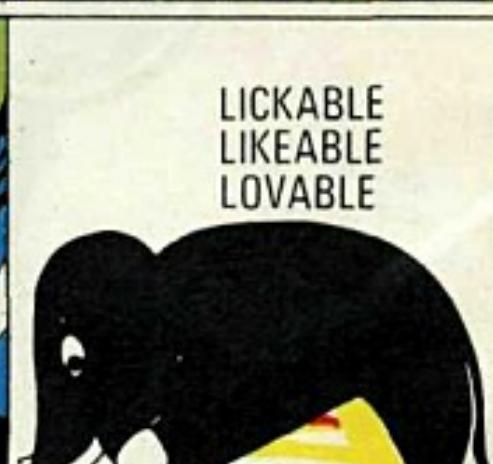
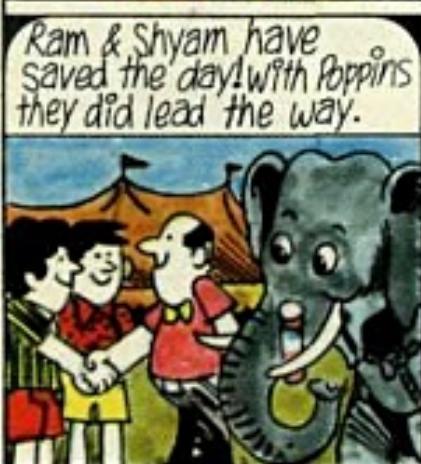
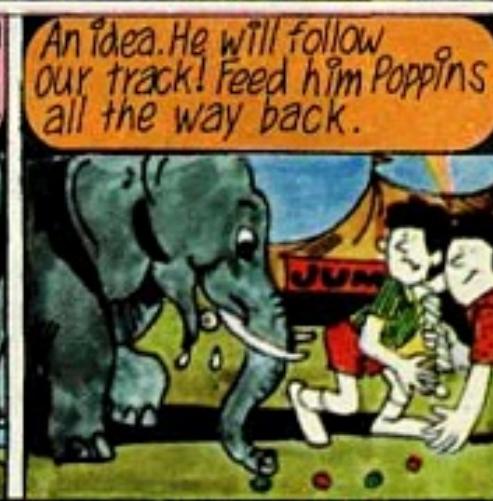
KANNADA — Daily
1400 to 1430 hrs.

11800 KHZ (25 M)
7790 KHZ (41 M)

Ram & Shyam and the Run-away Elephant



Attention! Grave news today,
Circus elephant's run away.



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